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ABSTRACT

This fifth annual report on dropout rates in the United States presents data for 1992 on high school dropout and retention rates and high school completion and graduate rates. The report is based on the best and most current available data, drawing on the Current Population Survey of the Census and the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988. Dropout rates have declined over the last 10 to 15 years. The event dropout rate (proportion who drop out in a single year) for persons aged 15 through 24 years in grades 10 through 12 in 1978 was 6.7 percent, but in 1992 it was 4.4 percent. The status dropout rate (proportion who have not completed high school and are not enrolled at a particular time) for persons aged 16 through 24 years has dropped from 14.2 percent in 1978 to 11.0 percent in 1992. Dropout rates decrease markedly as income rises. The overall differential between Whites and Blacks is narrowing, although differences do remain for racial and ethnic groups. Persons in central cities, in southern or western areas, in low income families, and from Hispanic American families were more likely to be status dropouts than were other groups. The high school completion rate has gradually increased over the last 20 years, from about 82 percent in 1972 to 86 percent in 1992. Fifteen figures and 28 tables present information on dropouts and trends. Three appendixes provide 71 tables, 1 figure, and technical information about the study. (SLD)

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Dropout Rates in the United States: 1992

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Dropout Rates in the United States: 1992

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"The purpose of the Center shall be to collect, analyze, and disseminate statistics and other data related to education in the United States and in other nations."—Section 406(b) of the General Education Provisions Act, as amended (20 U.S.C. 1221e–1).

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FOREWORD

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) collects and publishes information on the condition of education in the United States. The Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988 (P.L. 100-297) mandated specifically that NCES collect and publish data about dropping out of school. One of these mandates requires NCES annually to report dropout and retention rates for a 12-month period to the appropriate committees of Congress on the second Tuesday after Labor Day, beginning in 1989. This report was prepared pursuant to that mandate and is NCES' fifth annual report on dropout rates.

This report presents the data for 1992 on high school dropout and retention rates. This report also examines high school completion and graduation rates. At the conclusion of the report is a discussion of new data collection efforts by NCES that have a direct bearing on the issues of high school dropouts and graduates.

The report is based on the best and most current national data available at this time. It utilizes the Current Population Survey conducted by the Bureau of the Census to develop national event and status dropout rates and the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 to develop 8th- through 12th-grade and 10th- through 12th-grade cohort dropout rates. NCES is currently pursuing an extensive, integrated program to expand and improve data collected about dropouts in response to the provisions of P.L. 100-297. These efforts were described in an earlier report, *Activities to Plan and Implement the Reporting of School Dropout and Retention Indicators: Status Report to the United States Congress on Activities Related to Section 406 (G) of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) as Amended by Public Law 100-297*, May 1989. To this end, a dropout statistics collection was initiated in the 1991–92 school year as a component of the NCES Common Core of Data (CCD). In addition, as soon as final data are available, NCES will issue a report of state and school district dropout rates based on 1990 Decennial Census data.

I hope the information in this report will be useful in discussions about this critical national issue.

Emerson J. Elliott
Commissioner of
Education Statistics

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many individuals made substantial contributions to the preparation of this report. This report was prepared under the direction of Jeffrey Owings, Chief, Longitudinal and Household Studies Branch, Elementary/Secondary Education Statistics Division.

Special recognition is extended to Steven Ingels, Katy Dowd, Martin Frankel, and Jiahe Qian of National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago. Without their assistance, sections of this report based on the HS&B and NELS:88 surveys could not have been prepared. They provided the data analyses and special tabulations from these two surveys. In addition, Robert Kominski, Chief, Education and Social Stratification Branch, Population Division, Bureau of the Census, and Rosalind Bruno of his staff contributed to the preparation of the sections of the report based on the CPS data. They provided special tabulations and guidance in interpreting the data.

Numerous members of the NCES staff provided assistance in preparing various parts of the report. Nabeel Alsalam and his staff provided invaluable assistance in formulating the definition of event dropouts in CPS. Nabeel also provided the family income data used in the reporting of the event and status rates in this report. Mary Frase provided the detailed Hispanic population status rates from the November 1989 CPS. Ralph Lee provided the tables on the reasons for dropping out from the NELS:88 second followup survey.

Without the assistance of Robin Henke, Jacqueline Austin, Andrea Livingston, and Leslie Retallick of MPR Associates this report could not have been prepared. They provided invaluable analytical, editorial, graphic, and production assistance.

The report was reviewed by Susan Ahmed, Mary Frase, Lee Hoffman, John Burkett, and Robert Burton of NCES; Robert Kominski, Bureau of the Census; Russell Rumberger of the University of California at Santa Barbara; Floraline Stevens of the National Science Foundation; and Elisa Koff of the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Their efforts and contributions are greatly appreciated.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the fifth annual dropout report to Congress by the National Center for Education Statistics. It presents data for 1992 on high school dropout and retention rates along with time series data for the period from 1972 through 1992. Dropout rates with detailed data on language use, grade attainment, grade retention, and disabling conditions are included for the first time. This report contains 8th- through 12th-grade and 10th- through 12th-grade cohort dropout rates and analyses of reasons for dropping out for the 1988 cohort of eighth graders. Comparisons are drawn between cohort dropout rates for sophomores in 1990 and 1980. In addition, detailed data on demographic and socioeconomic levels are presented for high school completion and graduation rates data.

Types of Dropout Rates

There are many ways to define and calculate dropout rates. Each type of dropout rate measures a different facet of dropping out. Three types of dropout rates are discussed in this report: event rates, status rates, and cohort rates.

- Event rates measure the proportion of students who drop out in a single year without completing high school.
    - Event rates are important because they reveal how many students are leaving high school each year and how each year's rates compare with previous years' rates.
- Status rates measure the proportion of the population who have not completed high school and are not enrolled at one point in time, regardless of when they dropped out.
    - Status dropout rates are important because they reveal the extent of the dropout problem in the population and, therefore, suggest the magnitude of the challenge for further training and education that will permit these individuals to participate more fully in the economy and the life of the nation.
    - The status dropout rate is a cumulative rate. It is much higher than the event rate because it counts as dropouts all individuals who have not completed high school (and are not currently enrolled in school), regardless of when they last attended school.
- Cohort rates measure what happens to a single group (or cohort) of students over a period of time.
    - Cohort rates are important because they reveal how many students in a single age group (or in a specific grade in school) drop out over time.
    - Cohort rates also allow the calculation of how many dropouts from the cohort eventually complete high school with a diploma or an alternative credential.

This report updates the data on event and status rates presented in last year's report and presents several cohort rates, including those from the eighth-grade class of 1988.

Event, Status, and Cohort Dropout Rates

National dropout rates have declined over the last 10 to 15 years. The event dropout rate for persons 15 through 24 years old in grades 10 through 12 was 6.7 percent in 1978 and 4.4 percent in 1992. Furthermore, the status dropout rate for persons 16 through 24 years old was 14.2 percent in 1978 and 11.0 percent in 1992.

Analyses of dropout rates by selected demographic characteristics show that regardless of the type of rate—event, status, or cohort—male and female dropout rates are comparable. Similarly, event and status dropout rates presented with data on income levels show a consistent pattern, with dropout rates decreasing markedly as income levels increase. More detailed analyses of the status dropout rates show that within income levels, the rates for blacks and whites were similar. While analyses of status dropout rates show differences across regions, community types, and racial–ethnic groups, over-time analysis of the status dropout rates for each racial–ethnic group show that the differential between whites and blacks is narrowing. In addition, analysis of data from two sophomore cohorts a decade apart in time show a 43 percent reduction in the sophomore- to senior-year dropout rates.

Event Rate

- In 1992, some 4.4 percent of 15- to 24-year-olds in grades 10 through 12 dropped out of school. The event dropout rate represents approximately 383,000 students dropping out of school in 1992.

- The school retention rate for 1992—the proportion of students graduating or remaining in school from one year to the next—was 95.6 percent.

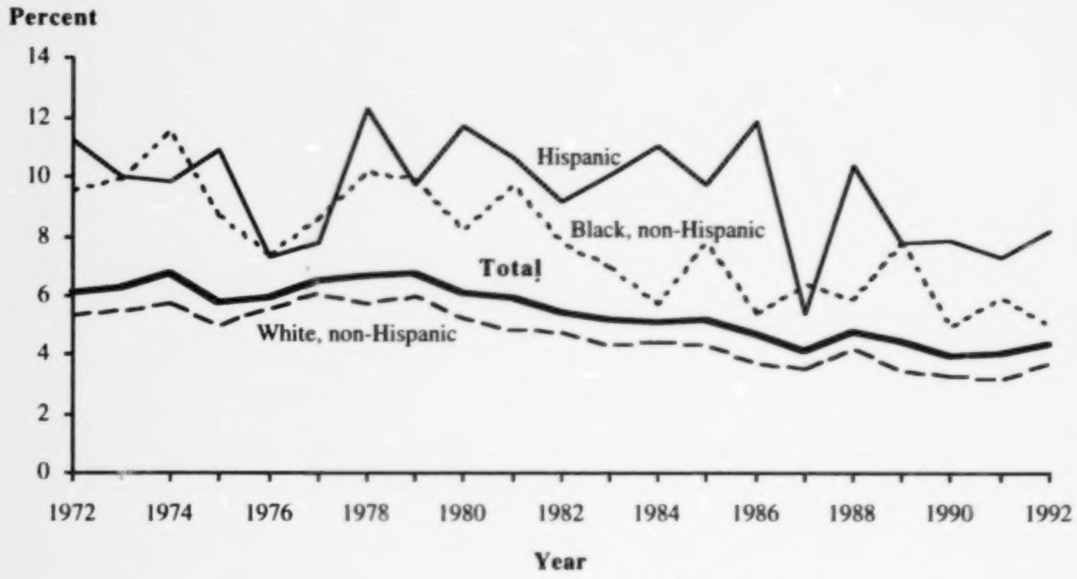
- The event dropout rate was highest among 15- through 24-year-olds living in families at the low income level, intermediate at middle income levels, and lowest at high income levels.

- The event rate for 1992 was not statistically different from the rate for 1991 nor were there significant differences between the rate for 1992 and the rate for 1991 for males, females, or members of different racial–ethnic groups.

- The event dropout rate has fallen over the last 10 to 15 years. In the late 1970s, the annual event dropout rate was over 6.5 percent. By 1992, the rate was 4.4 percent (figure A). This decline is also evident in the event dropout rates for white and black students. Grade- and age-specific dropout rates declined over most of the period as well.

- While low income students were more likely to drop out than their peers, only about one-third of all dropouts live in low income families. The majority of students who dropped out over the last year were white, were under 20 years old, and lived in middle income families and in suburban or nonmetropolitan areas.

Figure A.—Event dropout rates for grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by race-ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished tabulations.

Status Rate

- In 1992 approximately 3.4 million persons in the United States ages 16 through 24 had not completed high school and were not currently enrolled in school. This represented about 11.0 percent of all persons in this age group.
- The 1992 status rate for all persons ages 16 through 24 appears to be lower than the 1991 rate, and the 1992 rates for males and for whites also appear to be lower than the 1991 rates. Because the definitional changes introduced this year may affect these results, confirmation of these trends must await future years' data. Specifically, in 1992, the number of high school dropouts was increased by the number of students who completed the 12th grade but left school without graduation or completion certification. And the number of high school graduates was increased by the addition of the students who completed high school before the end of the 12th grade and by the addition of dropouts who completed high school by an alternative means.
- The percentage of young persons who are status dropouts has generally declined over the last two decades. Throughout the 1970s, about 14 to 15 percent of persons ages 16 through 24 years were not enrolled and had not completed high school, compared with 11 percent in 1992 (figure B).

- Persons in central cities, in the southern or western regions of the country, in low income families, and persons of Hispanic origin were more likely to be status dropouts than were other persons.

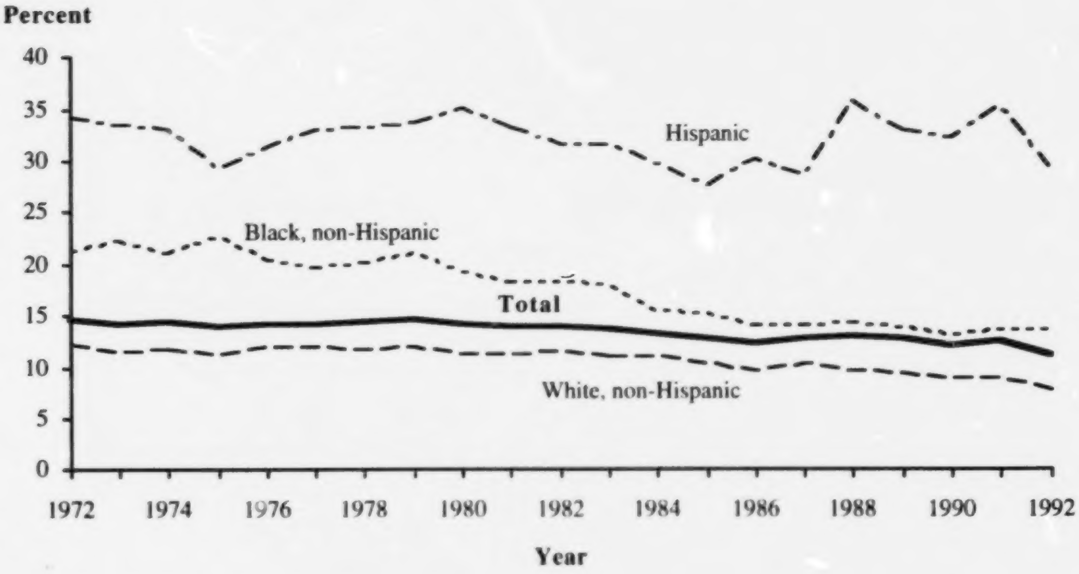
- Although the status dropout rates for blacks were higher than the rates for whites, there were no differences between the status dropout rates of white and black 16- through 24-year-olds at each of three income levels.

- In 1989, nearly one-half of all Hispanics ages 16 through 24 years were born outside of the 50 states and the District of Columbia, and their status dropout rate was over three times the overall rate for that year. In 1992, about three-quarters of all Hispanics ages 16 through 24 years reported speaking Spanish at home. The status dropout rates for Spanish-speaking Hispanics was three times the overall status dropout rate. This rate increased as reported English-speaking ability decreased.

- Just over one-half of the Hispanic dropouts, compared with one-third of the white dropouts and one-fourth of the black dropouts, have less than a 10th-grade education.

- The status dropout rate among young adults who were retained at least one time in grades kindergarten through 12 was two times the rate for those who were not retained. The dropout rate for young adults retained in grades 7 through 9 was two times the rate for those retained in grades kindergarten through 6.

Figure B.—Status dropout rates for persons ages 16–24, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished tabulations.

Cohort Rates

- Some 6.8 percent of the eighth-grade cohort of 1988 dropped out of school between the 8th and 10th grades; and 7.6 percent dropped out of school between the 10th and 12th grades. Over this 4-year period, some of the dropouts returned to school. As a result, by the spring of 1992, 11.6 percent of the students who were eighth graders in 1988 had left high school without finishing.

- There were no significant differences in the percentage of male and female eighth graders dropping out. But Hispanic and black students in the 1988 eighth-grade cohort were more likely to drop out than white and Asian students.

- Some of the most common reasons that students cited for dropping out were related to their experiences in the schools they left behind—including a general dislike for school and/or failure in their schoolwork.

- About one-quarter of female dropouts said they left school because they were pregnant. About one-third of the males and 20 percent of the female dropouts said they left because they found a job.

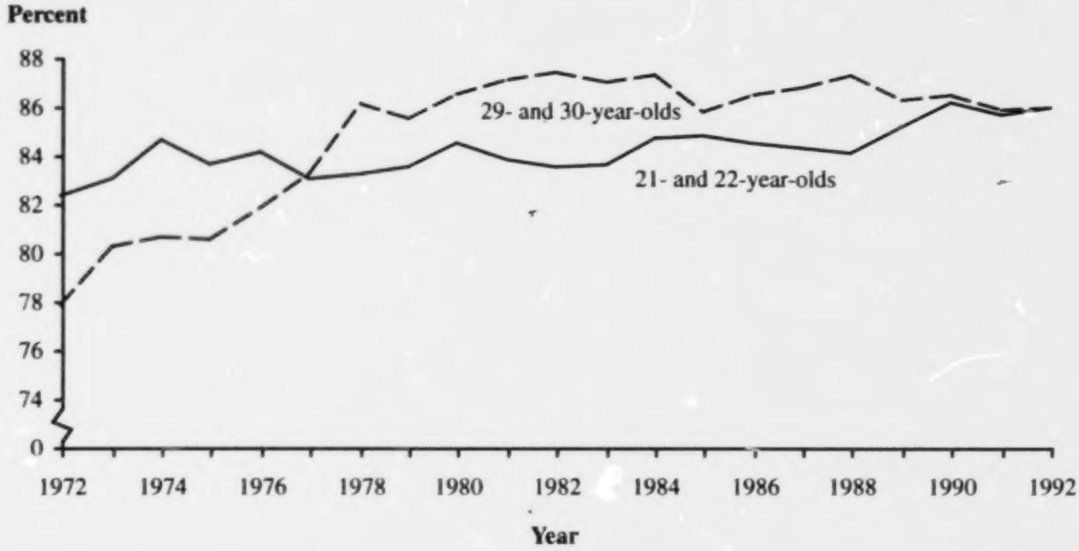
- Over the 10-year period between 1980–82 and 1990–92, there was a 43 percent reduction in the percent of sophomores who dropped out of high school. Students continue to identify failure in school and dislike for school as major factors leading to dropping out.

High School Completion and Graduation

- The high school completion rate, defined as the percentage of all persons ages 21 and 22 who have completed high school by receiving a high school diploma or equivalency certificate, was 86 percent in 1992. This rate has gradually increased over the last 20 years from approximately 82 percent in 1972 to 86 percent in 1992 (figure C).

- The high school completion rate for 29- and 30-year-olds increased markedly from about 78 percent in 1972 to around 87 percent in the early 1980s, and has remained relatively level over the past decade.

Figure C.—High school completion rates for persons of selected ages, by age group: October 1972 through October 1992



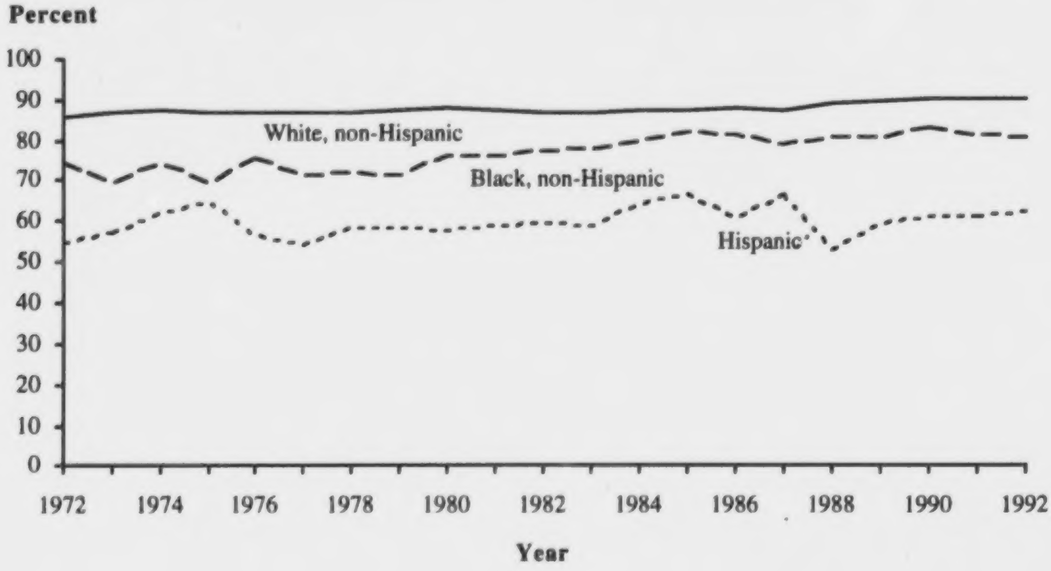
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished tabulations.

- Trends in the completion rates for white and black 21- through 22-year-olds (figure D) show larger increases for blacks than for whites, narrowing the difference between the two groups. Completion rates for white 21- and 22-year-olds increased from approximately 85 percent in 1972 to approximately 90 percent in 1991. Completion rates for black 21- and 22-year-olds increased from approximately 74 percent in 1972 to just over 81 percent in 1991. Over this time period the rates for Hispanics were lower than those for whites or blacks, but showed no apparent trend.

- High school completion rates were comparable for males and females, but differences were evident for racial–ethnic groups, income levels, and regions of the country. Students who were black or Hispanic, living in families with low income, or living in the South or West, were less likely to complete high school.

- In the spring of 1992, 88.4 percent of the 1988 cohort of eighth graders were either enrolled in school working towards high school completion or had already completed high school or passed an equivalency test. Among the dropouts from this cohort (11.6 percent), over one-half reported plans to get a GED or complete regular high school.

Figure D.—High school completion rates for all 21- and 22-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

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INTRODUCTION

Monitoring dropout rates at the national level provides one barometer of how we are doing in educating America's youth. Many alarms have been sounded over the past few years concerning the individual and societal loss that results when a student decides to drop out of school.[1] In the words of Senator Kennedy, "... [the dropouts'] decision is a tragedy for them and for the nation." This concern is echoed by Congressman Gingrich, "... young people who are not getting the education they need are in fact being hurt," and again by Senator Kassebaum when she argues: "The need to keep young people in school cannot be emphasized too strongly. Failure to receive a high school diploma spells tragedy for the individual dropout, who operates at a permanent disadvantage in job prospects and lifetime earnings. It is a tragedy as well for our Nation, which loses the productive capacity we so badly need from all of our workers."

The dropout rates in this report provide the information needed to measure national progress in curbing the dropout rates for the population as a whole, as well as those for youth of important subgroups within American society. Dropout rates alone, however, do not give a complete profile. A student's decision to quit school early does not have to be a lifelong decision.

Studies that follow groups of students over time show that substantial numbers of students who drop out end up completing their high school educations. This finding is corroborated in analyses of high school completion data that show students completing high school at ages beyond the average high school ages. Some of these students achieve a regular high school diploma, while others pursue alternative forms of high school certification. As Senator Kohl points out, the answers rest in the "... approaches needed to address the serious problems of young people dropping out of school ... to identify dropouts and put them back into a situation where they can learn and succeed."

Our role in the global economy is dependent upon the full participation of all Americans. In talking about high school dropout rates, Congressman Hayes states: "Our children are our most precious commodity and educating them is our Nation's best defense." In a similar vein, Senator Mikulski states: "... our world standing depends on how we train, develop, and support not just the brightest kids, but also the ones most in danger of losing ground due to poverty, drugs, or teen pregnancy." This position is reiterated by Senator Hatch: "... our society cannot afford to have students leaving high school if we are to have the workforce we need for the 21st century."

President Clinton recently addressed a group of educators about their work in the schools and about the world they need to prepare students to enter. He concluded by stating, "I think it is clear what our course should be. Every student ought to finish high school; every high school graduate ought to have at least two years of school-to-work transitional education and training so they can successfully learn for a lifetime."

The challenge lies ahead. This report provides some of the data that are essential to monitoring national progress. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is currently working, in cooperation with the states, to develop a comparable state-by-state reporting system on school dropouts.

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[1] Comments from each of the Senators and Members of the House of Representatives are from the Congressional Record, February 20 and 27, 1990. Comments from President Clinton are from a speech delivered to the National Education Association, July 5, 1993.

In accord with the 1988 Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments (P.L. 100-297) (20 U.S.C. 1221e-1), NCES annually reports to Congress on dropout and retention rates.[2] This fifth report contains three main sections. First, it provides an update on data on three measures—event, status, and cohort dropout rates—presented in the first four annual reports. The second section of the report focuses its discussion on the Current Population Survey (CPS) data on high school completion and graduation. In the third section, new NCES data collection efforts related to high school dropouts are described. At the end of the report, technical appendices provide a discussion of the statistical methodology used and also present standard errors for all estimates.

This year's dropout report differs in several ways from previous years' reports to Congress on dropout and retention rates. Dropout rates with detailed data on language use, grade attainment, grade retention, and disabling conditions are included for the first time. New data that summarize the dropout experiences of the eighth-grade class of 1988 are included, with analyses of reasons for dropping out. In addition, comparisons are drawn between the cohort dropout rates of the tenth-grade class of 1990 and the tenth-grade class of 1980. Finally, the discussion on high school completion and graduation rates includes detailed demographic and socioeconomic data for high school completion and graduation rates.

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[2] P. Kaufman, M. M. McMillen, E. Germino-Hausken, and D. Bradby, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1991*, U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, NCES 92-129; P. Kaufman, M. M. McMillen, and S. Whitener, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1990*, U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, NCES 91-053; P. Kaufman and M. Frase, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1989*, U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, NCES 90-659; and M. Frase, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1988*, U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, NCES 89-609.

EVENT, STATUS, AND COHORT DROPOUT RATES

There are a variety of ways to define and calculate dropout rates. Each type of dropout rate measures a different facet of dropping out. Three types of dropout rates are presented and discussed in this section. The first type of rate, event rate, measures the proportion of students who drop out in a single year without completing high school. The second type, status rate, measures the proportion of the population who have not completed high school and are not enrolled at one point in time, regardless of when they dropped out. And the third type, cohort rate, measures what happens to a single group (or cohort) of students over a period of time.

Event Rates

Event dropout rates provide a measure of recent dropout experiences. This rate measures the proportion of individuals who dropped out of school over a specified time interval, such as a 12-month period. The October Current Population Survey (CPS) provides data on the number or proportion of students who were enrolled in high school a year ago, are not enrolled in grades 10–12 now, and have not completed high school—that is, the number or proportion of students who dropped out in the past year.[3] The CPS does not collect data on last year's enrollment for persons younger than 15 years old. This makes it difficult to calculate dropout rates below grade 10. Using the existing data, event dropout rates can be computed in the aggregate over the grade 10 through grade 12 range, or separately as grade-specific rates for each grade—10, 11, and 12. Similarly, the data can be aggregated over a range of ages, or computed separately for single years of age. The aggregate, grade-specific, and age-specific event dropout and school retention rates are shown below for the most recent years. Current year dropout and school retention rates are presented for selected demographic groups. Finally, trends in the event dropout rate from 1972–1992 are presented for selected groups.

Event Rate: 1992

Table 1 shows the aggregate event rates for 1990–1992. In 1992, approximately 383,000 students or 4.4 percent of all high school students 15 through 24 years old dropped out of grades 10–12.[4] The school retention rate is the converse of the event dropout rate. That is, the event dropout rate plus the school retention rate sum to 100 percent. The 1992 school retention rate of 95.6 percent reflects the proportion of 15- through 24-year-old students remaining in school from 1991 to 1992 or completing high school in that year. The percentage of students dropping out in 1992 is not significantly different from the annual rates observed in 1990 and 1991.[5]

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[3] Specifically, the numerator of the event rate for 1992 is the number of persons 15 through 24 years old surveyed in 1992 who were enrolled in high school in October 1991, were not enrolled in high school (grades 10–12) in October 1992, and who also did not complete high school (i.e., had not received a high school diploma or an equivalency certificate) between October 1991 and October 1992. The denominator of the event rate is the sum of the dropouts (i.e., the numerator) and the number of all persons 15 through 24 years old who attended grades 10, 11, and 12 last year or who graduated or completed high school last year.

[4] Previous analyses relied on the 12th-grade completion status to identify high school graduates. This year, for the first time, graduation status is based entirely on an explicit question on high school graduation. Unlike prior years, in 1992, students who completed the 12th grade and left school without graduation or certification were counted as dropouts, and students who completed high school before the 12th grade were counted as graduates. The net effect of the change is small, resulting in an increase in the aggregate event dropout rate that is not significant. While not significant in the aggregate, the dropout rate for the 12th

Table 1.—Event dropout and retention rates and number of dropouts ages 15–24 in grades 10–12: October 1990 through October 1992

Year ending	Event dropout rate (percent)	School retention rate (percent)	Number of dropouts (in thousands)
1990	4.0	96.0	347
1991	4.0	96.0	348
1992*	4.4	95.6	383

* Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table 2 shows the 1992 event dropout and school retention rates for demographic characteristics of persons 15 through 24 years old. The event dropout rates were compared across income levels. These income levels are based on the percentile distribution, with low income defined as the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes (approximately $10,700 or less in 1992), middle income between 20 and 80 percent of all family incomes ($10,701–$49,999 in 1992), and high income defined as the top 20 percent of all family incomes ($50,000 or above in 1992). The rate was highest among 15- through 24-year-olds living in families at the low income level, intermediate at middle income levels, and lowest at high income levels.[6] Although the dropout rates disaggregated by race–ethnicity appear to follow a pattern—with the dropout rate for black students higher than the rate for white students, and the rate for Hispanic students higher than the rate for black students—the observed differences between racial or ethnic categories in the 1992 event dropout rates were not statistically significant.[7] There were also no significant differences between the

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grade increases because 12th-grade completers who do not graduate are now counted as dropouts. (See appendix B for a detailed description of this change.)

[5] Standard errors for all tables are provided in appendix A of this report.

[6] While the event of dropping out may have taken place at any time over the previous year, family income is measured for the entire 12-month period. It is therefore possible that the family income of the student at the time the individual dropped out was somewhat different than the current family income. Furthermore, family income is derived from a single question asked of the household respondent in the October CPS. In some cases, there are persons 15 through 24 years old living in the household who are unrelated to the household respondent, yet whose family income is defined as the income of the family of the household respondent. Also, persons may be living in a household without their parents. Family income in this case measures something other than family background. However, an analysis of 1991 dropout rates by family status indicated that the bias introduced by persons not living in households with their parents was not significant. See appendix B for more details.

[7] The statistical significance of these comparisons was assessed with Student's *t* test with a Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons. For a full discussion of the statistical methods used in this report, see appendix B.

1992 event dropout rates of males and females, or between those of residents in different regions of the country or different sizes or types of communities.[8]

The event rate for 1992 was not statistically different from the rate for 1991, nor were there significant differences between the rates for 1992 and the rates for 1991 for males, females, or members of different racial or ethnic groups.

While 10th- through 12th-grade students living in low income families were more likely to drop out than their peers, only about one-third of all dropouts live in low income families. The majority of students who dropped out over the year lived in middle income families. In addition, over half of the 1992 dropouts were white, and two-thirds lived in suburban or nonmetropolitan areas.

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[8] There are four Census regions used in this report: Northeast, Midwest, South, and West. The Northeast consists of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. The Midwest consists of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas. The South consists of Delaware, Maryland, Washington, D.C., Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas. The West consists of Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, Washington, Oregon, California, Alaska, and Hawaii.

Table 2.—Event dropout and retention rates and number and distribution of dropouts from grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by sex, race–ethnicity, income, region, and metropolitan status: October 1992

	Event dropout rate (percent)	School retention rate (percent)	Number of dropouts (thousands)	Percent of all dropouts
Total	4.4	95.6	383	100.0
Sex				
Male	3.9	96.1	176	46.0
Female	4.9	95.1	207	54.0
Race–ethnicity[1]				
White, non-Hispanic	3.7	96.3	225	58.7
Black, non-Hispanic	5.0	95.0	68	17.8
Hispanic	8.2	91.8	71	18.5
Family income[2]				
Low income level	10.9	89.1	133	34.7
Middle income level	4.4	95.6	217	56.7
High income level	1.3	98.7	33	8.6
Region				
Northeast	3.7	96.3	59	15.4
Midwest	4.8	95.2	107	27.9
South	4.4	95.6	136	35.5
West	4.4	95.6	81	21.1
Metropolitan status				
Central city	4.9	95.1	126	32.9
Suburban	3.6	96.4	153	39.9
Nonmetropolitan	4.9	95.1	104	27.2

[1] Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

[2] Family income in current residence. Low income is defined as the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes for 1992; middle income is between 20 and 80 percent of all family incomes; and high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes.

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

Grade-specific event dropout and school retention rates for persons 15 through 24 years old in grades 10–12 in 1992 are shown in table 3. In 1992, some 7.2 percent or 183,000 students dropped out of the 12th grade. This rate reflects the net effect of a change in the procedures used to identify high school graduation or completion.[9] As a result of the new and more accurate procedures, the 12th-grade rate is higher than either the 11th-grade rate of 3.7 percent or the 10th-grade rate of 2.5 percent.

Table 3.—Event dropout and retention rates and number and distribution of dropouts from grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by grade level: October 1992

	Event dropout rate (percent)	School retention rate (percent)	Number of dropouts (thousands)	Percent of all dropouts
Total	4.4	95.6	383	100.0
Grade*				
10th grade	2.5	97.5	80	20.9
11th grade	3.7	96.3	120	31.3
12th grade	7.2	92.8	183	47.8

* Dropouts were assumed to have dropped out in the next grade higher than the highest grade they actually completed; therefore, summer dropouts are assigned to the next highest grade.

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

Age-specific event dropout and school retention rates for persons ages 15–24 years old in grades 10 through 12 in 1992 are shown in table 4. The dropout rate for 19-year-old students is higher than the rates observed at ages 15 and 16 or age 17; and the event dropout rate for students aged 20 through 24 years is higher than the rates observed for ages 15 and 16, 17, 18, or 19.

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[9] Previous analyses relied on the 12th-grade completion status to identify high school graduates. This year, for the first time, graduation status is based entirely on an explicit question on high school graduation. Unlike prior years, in 1992, students who completed the 12th grade and left school without graduation or certification were counted as dropouts, and students who completed high school before the 12th grade were counted as graduates. The net effect of the change is small, resulting in an increase in the aggregate event dropout rate that is not significant. While not significant in the aggregate, the dropout rate for the 12th grade increases because 12th-grade completers who do not graduate are now counted as dropouts. (See appendix B for a detailed description of this change.)

Table 4.—Event dropout and retention rates and number and distribution of dropouts from grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by age group: October 1992

	Event dropout rate (percent)	School retention rate (percent)	Number of dropouts (thousands)	Percent of all dropouts
Total	4.4	95.6	383	100.0
Age*				
15–16	2.5	97.5	62	16.2
17	3.2	96.8	94	24.5
18	4.4	95.6	105	27.4
19	8.9	91.1	62	16.2
20–24	23.2	76.8	60	15.7

* Age when a person dropped out may be one year younger, because the dropout event could occur at any time over a 12-month period.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

Trends

Regression analysis was used to test for trends across age groups and over time. Figure 1 shows the aggregate event rates for the years 1972–1992.[10] Before interpreting this year's trend results, a word of caution is in order. The change in the method of determining graduation status resulted in a small increase in the aggregate event dropout rate that was not statistically significant.[11] While this change is small in the aggregate, it may affect some subgroups more than others and could have an impact on the trend analysis. To the extent that previously identified trends continue, the findings can be accepted with caution. If a trend that was significant changes with the addition of these 1992 data, that change can be noted; however, any firm conclusions about a substantive change must await additional data in future years.

The event rates indicate that the incidence of dropping out has fallen over the last 10 to 15 years.[12] Specifically, in the late 1970s, the event rate was over 6.5 percent. By 1990 and 1991, it had dropped to 4.0 percent, and the 1992 rate was 4.4 percent.[13] Furthermore, dropout rates for white and black students have generally fallen.[14] For example, in the late 1970s, the rate for black students 15 through 24 years old was close to 10 percent; by 1991 the rate was down to 6.0 percent, and the 1992 rate indicates that 5.0 percent of this age group dropped out of school during the year. For white students, the percent of 15- through 24-year-olds who dropped out of high school was around 6 percent in the late 1970s; it dropped to 3.2 percent by 1991 and was 3.7 percent in 1992. Estimates of the Hispanic dropout rate evidence no apparent statistical trend but, on average, were higher than comparable rates for whites and blacks over this period.[15]

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[10] Supporting data and standard errors for all figures are provided in appendix A of this report.

[11] Previous analyses relied on the 12th-grade completion status to identify high school graduates. This year, for the first time, graduation status is based entirely on an explicit question on high school graduation. Unlike prior years, in 1992, students who completed the 12th grade and left school without graduation or certification were counted as dropouts, and students who completed high school before the 12th grade were counted as graduates. The net effect of the change is small, resulting in an increase in the aggregate event dropout rate that is not significant. While not significant in the aggregate, the dropout rate for the 12th grade increases because 12th-grade completers who do not graduate are now counted as dropouts. (See appendix B for a detailed description of this change.)

[12] Beginning with 1986, in order to improve the quality of the data, the Bureau of the Census instituted new editing procedures for cases with missing data on school enrollment items. The effect of the editing changes

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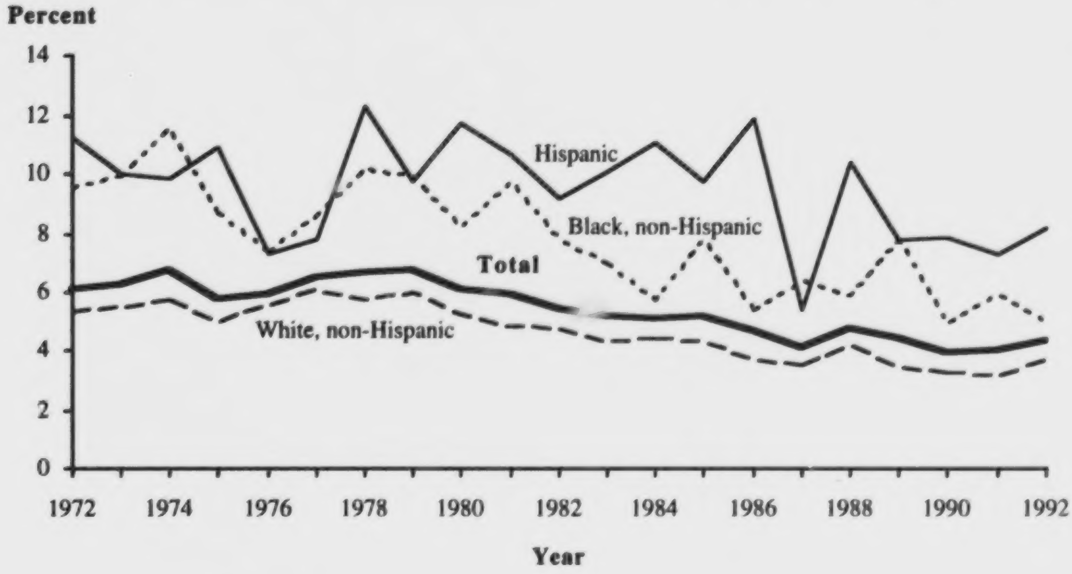
lowered the event dropout rate by about 0.4 percent, thus confounding the actual size of the decline in the dropout rates in the late 1980s. However, the effect of these editing changes was held constant when the tests of trend were conducted. See appendix B for further details.

[13] The statistical significance of the trends presented in this section was assessed using weighted least squares regression. For a full discussion of the statistical methods used in this report, see appendix B.

[14] These findings are consistent with analyses reported by G. Natriello, A. M. Pallas, and E. L. McDill, "Taking Stock: Renewing Our Research Agenda on the Causes and Consequences of Dropping Out," in *School Dropouts: Patterns and Policies*, ed. G. Natriello (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1989): 168–178.

[15] The erratic nature of the Hispanic event rate reflects, in part, the small sample size of Hispanics in CPS. However, the finding of a higher dropout rate for Hispanics, compared with blacks and whites, is consistent with previous research reported by G. H. Brown, N. L. Rose, S. T. Hill, and M. A. Olivas, in *The Condition of Education for Hispanic Americans*, U.S. Department of Education (1980), as well as by R. W. Rumberger in "Dropping Out of High School: The Influence of Race, Sex, and Family Background," *American Educational Research Journal* 20 (1983): 199–220.

Figure 1.—Event dropout rates for grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Event dropout rates declined for both black and white male students (table 5).[16] Black male rates fell from about 11 percent in 1978 to about 5 percent in 1991 and about 3 percent in 1992. The white male rate declined from slightly over 6 percent in the late 1970s to about 3 percent in 1991, and the 1992 rate was 3.5 percent. The event dropout rates for black and white females have also decreased.[17] The rate for black females fluctuated around 10 percent during the late 1970s and was just under 7 percent in 1991 and 1992. The rate for white females fluctuated between 5 and 6 percent during the late 1970s and has fluctuated between 3 and 4 percent since 1983. As is the case in the aggregate, the rates for Hispanic males and females evidence no apparent statistical trend.

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[16] While table 5 displays biennial data for selected years between 1978 and 1992, data for all of the years 1972 through 1992 were used in the statistical analysis of the trends. Data for the years 1972 through 1992 are presented in table A5 in appendix A.

[17] While a decline was not evident in the rates for black females in 1991, this represents a continuation of a decline observed in 1990.

Table 5.—Event dropout rates, grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by sex and race–ethnicity: October 1978 through October 1992

	White, non-Hispanic		Black, non-Hispanic		Hispanic	
Year	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
			(percent)			
1978	6.4	5.1	11.0	9.5	15.9	8.5
1980	5.7	4.8	7.7	8.7	17.6	6.7
1982	4.9	4.6	8.9	6.6	9.5	8.8
1984	4.8	4.1	6.0	5.5	12.3	10.2
1986	3.8	3.7	5.1	5.7	12.4	11.3
1988[1]	4.3	4.1	6.3	5.6	12.3	8.2
1990[1]	3.5	3.1	4.2	5.7	8.7	7.2
1992[1,2]	3.5	4.0	3.3	6.7	7.6	9.0

[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

NOTE: Some figures are revised from those previously published.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Figure 2 shows the grade-specific event rates for 15- through 24-year-olds in grades 10–12 for the years 1972 through 1992.[18] The decline observed in the aggregate dropout rate is evident at grades 10, 11, and 12. More specifically, the event rate for 10th-grade dropouts fell from 5.7 percent in 1979 to 3.3 percent in 1991 and 2.6 percent in 1992. The rate for 11th-grade dropouts declined from about 6 percent in the late 1970s to 3.2 percent in 1991 and 3.8 percent in 1992. The 12th-grade rate dropped from about 8 percent in the late 1970s to 4.7 percent in 1991. Then, in 1992, the change in procedures led to the identification of 12th-grade completers who did not graduate, which resulted in a 7.5 percent event dropout rate for 12th graders.

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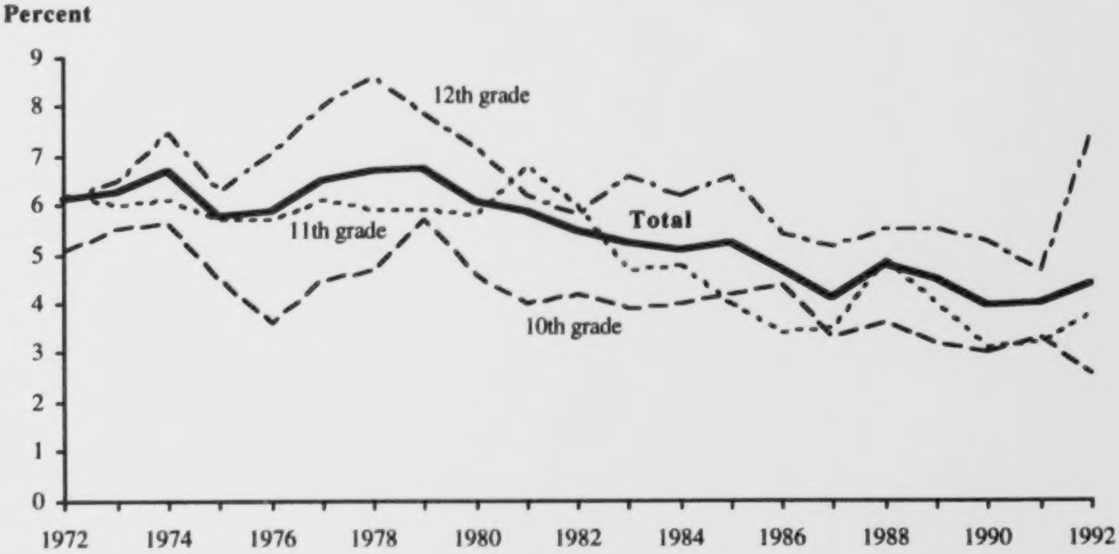
[18] Students who last attended the 9th, 10th, or 11th grades are assumed to have dropped out in the next grade after the highest grade they reported completing.

Figure 2.—Event dropout rates for grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by grade level: October 1972 through October 1992



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Figure 3 shows the age-specific event rates for 15- through 24-year-olds for the years 1972–1992. The declines observed in the aggregate and grade-specific rates are apparent in the age-specific rates as well. There were measurable decreases in the event dropout rates over the last 10 to 15 years for persons ages 15–16, 17, and 18. While the event dropout rates for age 19 showed evidence of decreasing from the late 1970s through 1991 and ages 20–24 showed evidence of decreasing from the mid 1980s through 1991, these trends did not continue into 1992. The rates for these ages may be affected by the change in the procedures used to identify high school graduation or completion. The event dropout rate for 19-year-olds was 5.8 percent in 1991 and 8.9 percent in 1992. The event dropout rate for 20- through 24-year-olds went from 10.3 in 1991 to 23.2 in 1992.[19]

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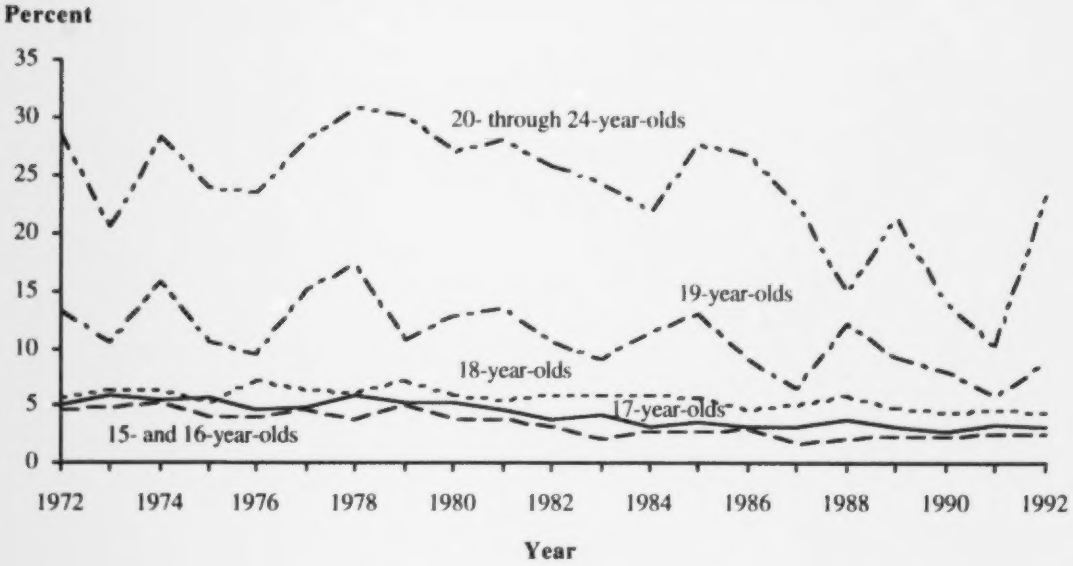
[19] This increase may be due, at least in part, to procedures used in the reporting of special education students. In principle, efforts are made by the Bureau of the Census to identify special education students and treat them as not enrolled. However, if special education students are not identified, then they may be reported as completing 12th grade with no diploma. They will, by definition, be counted as dropouts.

Figure 3.—Event dropout rates for grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by age group: October 1972 through October 1992



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Status Rates

In addition to measuring recent dropout experiences, it is also important to know how many individuals share the status of dropout, regardless of when they dropped out. CPS data can be used to calculate the number or proportion of individuals who, as of October of any given year, have not completed high school and are not currently enrolled in school.[20] Those persons who are still in school and those who have completed high school after dropping out are not dropouts. The aggregate rates and numbers of status dropouts for 16- through 24-year-olds are presented for the most recent years. Current year status rates are presented for age, sex, race–ethnicity, and a number of other demographic characteristics. Finally, trends in the status dropout rate from 1972–92 are presented for selected groups.

Roughly speaking, the status dropout rate is a composite of the event rates summed over several years. The count of all dropouts includes status dropouts from the previous year, plus new dropouts in the most current year, less those dropouts who returned to school or completed high school during the current year. (See appendix B for a more detailed discussion.)

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[20] The numerator of this rate is the number of individuals ages 16 through 24 who, as of October of any given year, have not completed high school and are not currently enrolled in school. The denominator is the number of persons in that age group in October of that year.

Status Rate: 1992

In 1992 about 3.4 million persons in the United States ages 16 through 24 were high school dropouts, representing approximately 11.0 percent of all persons in this age group (table 6). Both the count and the proportion of dropouts in 1992 were lower than the estimates reported in 1990 and 1991.[21]

Table 6.—Rate and number of status dropouts, ages 16–24: October 1990 through October 1992

	October		
	1990	1991	1992*
Status dropout rate (percent)	12.1	12.5	11.0
Number of status dropouts (in thousands)	3,797	3,881	3,410
Population (in thousands)	31,443	31,171	30,944

* Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table 7 shows age-specific status dropout rates for 16- through 24-year-olds. Examination of the data shows that the rate increases from age 16 through age 18, as the young adult population passes through the grades where they are most likely to drop out. After age 18, the rates are fairly comparable for each year of age. These trends mirror the pattern observed in the 1991 data, albeit at a lower level in 1992.[22]

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[21] Previous analyses relied on the 12th-grade completion status to identify high school graduates. This year, for the first time, graduation status is based on an explicit question in the CPS about high school graduation. Unlike prior years, in 1992, students who completed the 12th grade and left school without graduation or certification were counted as dropouts. And, students who completed high school before the 12th grade, and students who left school before the 12th grade, never completed the 12th grade, but completed high school by an alternative means, are counted as graduates. This results in an increase in the number of high school graduates. Conversely, both the number of status dropouts and the related rate decrease (see appendix B).

[22] A comparison of the 1992 data in table 7 with data from 1991 shows an overall decrease in the level of the age-specific status dropout rates.

Table 7.—Rate, number, and distribution of status dropouts, by age: October 1992

	Status dropout rate	Number of status dropouts	Population (in thousands)	Percent of all dropouts	Percent of population
Total	11.0	3,410	30,944	100.0	100.0
Age					
16	3.7	122	3,320	3.6	10.7
17	6.1	205	3,346	6.0	10.8
18	12.0	394	3,280	11.6	10.6
19	11.9	386	3,255	11.3	10.5
20	13.6	450	3,304	13.2	10.7
21	13.7	491	3,580	14.4	11.6
22	12.8	471	3,687	13.8	11.9
23	12.1	445	3,679	13.0	11.9
24	12.7	444	3,494	13.0	11.3

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

Table 8 shows the 1992 status dropout rates for persons ages 16 through 24 with different demographic characteristics. In October 1992, there were similar numbers of male and female dropouts. Income differentials in the status dropout rate for 16- through 24-year-olds mirror those observed for the event dropout rates.[23] When dropouts living in families with low, middle, and high incomes are compared, the status dropout rate decreases as income increases.[24] Persons living in central cities, and in the southern or western regions of the country, were more likely than others to be status dropouts.[25] The status dropout rate for black 16- through 24-year-olds was higher than the rate for whites, and the rate for Hispanics was higher than the rates for blacks and whites.[26]

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[23] The patterns observed in the dropout rates by income levels are consistent with previous analyses of dropout rates among young adults from varying socioeconomic levels. See R. B. Eckstrom, M. E. Goertz, J. M. Pollack, and D. A. Rock, "Who Drops Out of High School and Why? Findings from a National Study," in *School Dropouts: Patterns and Policies*, ed. G. Natriello (New York: Teachers College Press, 1989): 52–69; R. D. Mare, "Social Background and School Continuation Decisions," *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 75 (1980): 295–305; J. Combs and W. W. Cooley, "Dropouts in High School and After School," *American Educational Research Journal* 5 (1986): 343–364; and R. W. Rumberger, *American Educational Research Journal* 20 (1983): 199–220.

[24] While the event of dropping out for the status rate may have taken place at any time in the past, family income is measured for the entire 12-month period. It is therefore possible that the family income of the student at the time the individual dropped out was somewhat different than the current family income. Furthermore, family income is derived from a single question asked of the household respondent in the October CPS. In some cases, there are persons 16 through 24 years old living in the household who are unrelated to the household respondent, yet whose family income is defined as the income of the family of the household respondent. Also, persons may be living in a household without their parents. Family income in this case measures something other than family background. However, an analysis of 1991 dropout rates by family status indicated that the bias introduced by persons not living in households with their parents was not significant. See appendix B for more details.

[25] These findings are corroborated in research reported by G. Stice and R. B. Eckstrom, *High School Attrition*, Research Bulletin, No. RB-64-53 (Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service, 1964); R. B. Eckstrom, M. E. Goertz, J. M. Pollack, and D. A. Rock, in *School Dropouts: Patterns and Policies*: 52–

Table 8.—Rate, number, and distribution of status dropouts, by sex, race–ethnicity, income, region, and metropolitan status: October 1992

	Status dropout rate	Number of status dropouts (in thousands)	Population (in thousands)	Percent of all dropouts	Percent of population
Total	11.0	3,410	30,944	100.0	100.0
Sex					
Male	11.3	1,742	15,375	51.1	49.7
Female	10.7	1,668	15,569	48.9	50.3
Race–ethnicity[1]					
White, non-Hispanic	7.7	1,676	21,697	49.1	70.1
Black, non-Hispanic	13.7	621	4,527	18.2	14.6
Hispanic	29.4	1,022	3,476	30.0	11.2
Family income[2]					
Low income level	24.6	1,441	5,864	42.3	19.0
Middle income level	10.1	1,801	17,810	52.8	57.6
High income level	2.3	169	7,270	5.0	23.5
Region					
Northeast	8.6	501	5,845	14.7	18.9
Midwest	7.9	600	7,551	17.6	24.4
South	12.4	1,352	10,889	39.6	35.2
West	14.4	957	6,658	28.1	21.5
Metropolitan status					
Central city	13.4	1,327	9,918	38.9	32.1
Suburban	9.6	1,373	14,322	40.3	46.3
Nonmetropolitan	10.6	709	6,703	20.8	21.7

[1] Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

[2] Family income in current residence. Low income is defined as the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes for 1992; middle income is between 20 and 80 percent of all family incomes; and high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes.

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

69; and R. Calitri, *Minority Secondary Education in New York* (New York, NY: Aspiria of New York, Inc., 1983).

[26] These race differentials are consistent with those noted in the event rates presented earlier in this report; thus, they are also consistent with the previous analyses noted in the discussion of event dropout rates.

The decline observed in the aggregate status dropout rate is reflected in notable decreases from 1991 to 1992 in the rates for males and for whites.[27] Status dropout rates for females and for Hispanics suggest the same patterns, but the differences are not statistically significant. In contrast, status dropout rates for blacks evidence no change from 1991 to 1992 (13.6 percent to 13.7 percent).

Analysis of status dropout rates for racial–ethnic groups by income level shows that the status dropout rates for all three groups were highest in the low income group, and the rates in middle income families were higher than the rates in high income families (table 9). In addition, when comparisons are drawn across racial–ethnic groups within each income level, there were no significant differences in status dropout rates of white and black 16- through 24-year-olds.[28] The rates for Hispanic 16- through 24-year-olds were, however, higher than for whites and blacks within the low and middle income levels.

Table 9.—Status dropout rate, ages 16–24, by income and race–ethnicity: October 1992

	Total	Race–ethnicity[1]		
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
Total	11.0	7.7	13.7	29.4
Family income[2]				
Low income level	24.6	19.0	24.0	44.7
Middle income level	10.1	7.9	9.6	25.2
High income level	2.3	1.9	0.8	9.6

[1] Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

[2] Family income in current residence. Low income is defined as the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes for 1992; middle income is between 20 and 80 percent of all family incomes; and high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

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[27] Race-specific data for 1991 are presented in table A38 of appendix A, and sex-specific data in table A42.

[28] In a similar vein, R. W. Rumberger (1983, 211) concluded that racial–ethnic differences in dropout rates ". . . can be explained mostly by differences in family origins." G. G. Wehlage and R. A. Rutter also concluded that race is not predictive of dropout status when family background is controlled in "Dropping Out: How Much do Schools Contribute to the Problem?", in *School Dropouts: Patterns and Policies*, ed. G. Natriello (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1989): 70-88.

Table 10 includes status dropout rates for racial–ethnic groups within each region of the country. In each region, the rates for Hispanics were higher than the rates for whites. The status dropout rates for blacks were higher than those for whites in the Northeast and Midwest. In addition, the rates for Hispanics were higher than those for blacks in the South and West.[29]

Table 10.—Status dropout rate, ages 16–24, by region and race–ethnicity: October 1992

	Total	Race–ethnicity*		
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
Total	11.0	7.7	13.7	29.4
Region				
Northeast	8.6	6.1	15.3	21.6
Midwest	7.9	6.3	14.7	27.2
South	12.4	10.3	13.0	25.6
West	14.4	7.4	12.9	34.1

* Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

Several factors have been identified as possible contributors to these status dropout rates. Data available for the first time in 1992 provide the information needed to explore some of these factors. For example, a language barrier is one possible explanation for higher status dropout rates among Hispanic young adults, but national data have not been available to test hypotheses in this area.

Previous analyses showed that, in 1989, nearly half (45 percent) of all Hispanics in the 16- through 24-year-old age group were not born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia.[30] The status dropout rate for this group of recent Hispanic immigrants was in excess of the levels reported for recent non-Hispanic immigrants and for the general population (table 11).[31] These data raised the question of the role of language use, recency of migration, and dropout status.

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[29] While the rates for the remaining comparisons (i.e., blacks and whites in the South and West and Hispanics and blacks in the Northeast and Midwest) appear to follow the patterns observed in the aggregate, the observed differences are not statistically significant.

[30] M. Frase, *Are High Hispanic Dropout Rates a Result of Recent Immigration?*, U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (July 1992).

[31] Similar patterns are observed for Hispanics whose parents migrated to the United States and for Hispanics whose families had been in the country for longer periods of time.

Table 11.—Rate and number of status dropouts, ages 16–24, by recency of migration and ethnicity: November 1989

	Status dropout rate	Number of dropouts (in thousands)	Status dropout rate Ethnicity	
			Hispanic	Non-Hispanic
Total[1]	12.5	3,991	31.0	10.3
Recency of migration				
Born outside 50 states and D.C.	28.9	684	43.0	7.9
First generation[2]	10.4	239	17.3	6.2
Second generation or more[3]	11.2	2,878	23.7	10.7

[1] Total includes a small proportion for whom place of birth is unknown.

[2] Individuals defined as first generation were born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia and have one or both parents born outside the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

[3] Individuals defined as second generation or more were born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia and have both parents born in the United States.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, November 1989.

Data on language use in 1992 show that about three-quarters of all Hispanics ages 16 through 24 years, and 80 percent of the Hispanic dropouts in this age group, speak Spanish at home (table 12).[32] When Spanish-speaking Hispanics are asked about their English language ability, three-quarters report that they speak English very well or well. Although only one-quarter of all Hispanics who speak Spanish at home report difficulty speaking English (17 percent report not well and 8 percent report not at all), about one-half of the Spanish-speaking Hispanic dropouts are in this group (32 percent report not well and 22 percent report not at all).

The status dropout rate of 32 percent for Hispanics who speak Spanish at home is nearly three times the overall status dropout rate and two times the status rates for Hispanics who speak English very well or do not report using Spanish at home. The status dropout rate tends to increase as English language ability declines—from 17 percent among Hispanics who report speaking English very well to 83 percent among Hispanics who report no ability to speak English.

By way of comparison, the status dropout rate for non-Hispanic young adults who speak a language other than English at home is less than the aggregate status dropout rate. However, it remains the case that the status dropout rate increases among non-Hispanic youth who speak a language other than English at home as reported English-speaking ability decreases.

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[32] These results are consistent with an earlier analysis of Hispanics and Hispanic dropouts ages 14–25 in 1976 where English and non-English language use were considered. L. Steinberg, P. L. Blinde, and K. S. Chan, "Dropping Out Among Minority Youth," *Review of Educational Research* 54 (1984): 113–132.

Table 12.—Rate, number, and distribution of status dropouts speaking a non-English language at home, ages 16–24, by ethnicity and English-speaking ability: October 1992

	Status dropout rate	Number of status dropouts (in thousands)	Population (in thousands)	Percent of all dropouts	Percent of population
Total	11.0	3,410	30,944	100.0	100.0
Hispanics	29.4	1,022	3,476	100.0	100.0
Language at home[1]					
English	14.1	80	573	7.8	16.5
Spanish	32.1	823	2,568	80.5	73.9
English-speaking ability[2]					
Very well	16.6	249	1,495	30.2	58.2
Well	30.4	131	430	15.9	16.7
Not well	61.8	263	425	32.0	16.5
Not at all	83.2	178	214	21.6	8.3
Non-Hispanics	8.7	2,388	27,468	100.0	100.0
Language at home[3]					
English	8.6	2,047	23,746	85.7	86.4
A non-English language	6.1	121	1,832	5.1	6.7
English-speaking ability[4]					
Very well	5.2	68	1,321	56.2	72.1
Well	4.5	15	342	12.4	18.7
Not well	17.0	23	133	19.0	7.3
Not at all[5]	—	—	—	—	—

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[1] These figures reflect responses on two items, "Does . . . speak a language other than English at home?" and "What is this language?" Not shown separately are a small number of Hispanics speaking a non-English language other than Spanish at home or those who did not respond to the items.

[2] These figures reflect only those Hispanics speaking Spanish in their homes and responding to the item "How well does . . . speak English?"

[3] These figures reflect responses on the item, "Does . . . speak a language other than English at home?" Not shown separately are those who did not respond to this item.

[4] These figures reflect only those non-Hispanics speaking a non-English language in their homes, and responding to the item "How well does . . . speak English?"

[5] Sample size too small for a reliable estimate.

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding, or to missing responses.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

There is also prior evidence that suggests that Hispanic students who drop out leave school earlier than non-Hispanic students who drop out.[33] For example, data from 1989 showed that 46 percent of the Hispanic dropouts completed less than 9th grade, compared with 19 percent of the non-Hispanic dropouts (table 13). Data for 1992 show that 40 percent of Hispanic status dropouts left school with less than a 9th-grade education, compared with 15 percent of the white students and 10 percent of the black students (table 14).[34] Further analysis of the 1992 data reveals that an additional 15 to 20 percent of the status dropouts in each racial–ethnic group completed the 9th grade, but left school prior to the completion of the 10th grade. As a result, over one-half (57 percent) of the Hispanic status dropouts, compared with one-third of the white status dropouts and about one-fourth of the black status dropouts, have less than a 10th-grade education.

Table 13.—Educational attainment of status dropouts, ages 16–24, by recency of migration and ethnicity: November 1989

	Years of School Completed				
	< 7	7–8	9	10	11
Total[1]	10.3	16.1	20.6	27.4	25.7
Recency of migration					
Born outside 50 states and D.C.	35.1	21.8	18.2	12.9	12.0
First generation[2]	3.2	15.0	15.7	23.4	42.7
Second generation or more[3]	4.2	14.4	21.8	31.0	28.6
Ethnicity					
Non-Hispanic	4.8	14.4	21.5	31.1	28.2
Hispanic	25.4	20.8	18.3	16.8	18.7

[1] Total includes a small proportion for whom place of birth is unknown.

[2] Individuals defined as first generation were born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia and have one or both parents born outside the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

[3] Individuals defined as second generation or more were born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia and have both parents born in the United States.

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, November 1989.

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[33] P. Kaufman, M. M. McMillen, E. Germino-Hausken, and D. Bradby, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1991*, NCES 92-129.

[34] The patterns observed among non-Hispanics are consistent with the report that students are more likely to drop out after reaching grade nine. See E. L. McDill, G. Natriello, and A. M. Pallas, "A Population at Risk: Potential Consequences of Tougher School Standards for Student Dropouts," in *School Dropouts: Patterns and Policies*, ed. G. Natriello (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1989): 168–178.

Table 14.—Percentage distribution of status dropouts, ages 16–24, by level of schooling attained and race–ethnicity: October 1992

	Total	Race–ethnicity*		
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Level of schooling attained				
Less than 1st grade	2.2	2.1	1.8	2.4
1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th grade	2.6	0.5	0.3	7.3
5th or 6th grade	6.9	1.6	0.8	20.0
7th or 8th grade	9.9	11.0	7.3	9.9
9th grade	17.5	17.4	18.6	16.9
10th grade	24.4	26.5	28.2	18.5
11th grade	27.1	29.6	34.7	18.5
12th grade, without diploma	9.3	11.4	8.4	6.6

* Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

The proportion of 16- through 24-year-olds who left school without completing high school is higher among Hispanic students than it is for white or black students. However, the fact remains that when dropouts are taken as a group, about one-half of all status dropouts are white (49.1 percent). While describing the composition of the dropout population is one element in analyzing dropouts, there is a need to better understand the complex factors that contribute to each student's decision to leave school. The 1992 CPS data include new data on disabling conditions and on grade retention, both of which can be examined within the dropout population. Additional data on reasons for leaving school are available from longitudinal studies of selected cohorts of students and will be analyzed along with cohort dropout rates for those students.

Analyses of the disabling conditions show that while the status dropout rate is elevated for young adults with reported disabling conditions that might adversely affect their ability to learn (19.8 percent versus 10.2 percent), only 7 percent of all status dropouts report such conditions (table 15).[35] Furthermore, the status dropout rate is only elevated for three of the nine disabling conditions (learning disability, mental retardation, and serious emotional disturbance).[36]

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[35] Disabling conditions have been considered both directly, as factors that place students at increased risk of dropping out, and indirectly, as factors that can contribute to lower achievement levels and an increased risk of school failure. See, for example, D. L. Speece and D. H. Cooper, "Ontogeny of School Failure: Classification of First-Grade Children, *American Educational Research Journal* 27 (1990): 119–140; R. B. Cairns, B. D. Cairns, and H. J. Neckerman, "Early School Dropout Configurations and Determinants," *Child Development* 60 (1989): 1437–1452; R. B. Eckstrom, M. E. Goertz, J. M. Pollack, and D. A. Rock, in *School Dropouts: Patterns and Policies*, 52–69; and P. Kaufman and D. Bradby, *Characteristics of At-Risk Students in NELS:88*, U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, NCES 92-042.

Table 15.—Rate, number, and distribution of status dropouts, ages 16–24, by disabling condition(s) affecting learning: October 1992

	Status dropout rate	Number of status dropouts (in thousands)	Population (in thousands)	Percent of all dropouts	Percent of population
Total	11.0	3,410	30,944	100.0	100.0
Disabling condition[1]					
No	10.2	2,807	27,452	82.3	88.7
Yes	19.8	231	1,167	6.8	3.8
Type of disabling condition					
Learning disability[2]	18.7	216	1156	6.3	3.7
Mental retardation	22.4	86	383	2.5	1.2
Speech impairment	13.2	65	491	1.9	1.6
Serious emotional disturbance	19.9	80	405	2.3	1.3
Deafness	10.3	25	238	0.7	0.8
Other hearing impairment	13.5	47	350	1.4	1.1
Blindness	16.2	35	215	1.0	0.7
Other vision impairment	8.6	54	633	1.6	2.0
Orthopedic impairment	12.3	53	435	1.6	1.4

[1] Not shown separately are those who did not respond to this item, but who are included in the total.

[2] The dropout rate for the 658,000 students with learning disability reported as the sole disabling condition is 16 percent (based on 105,000 dropouts).

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding, or to missing responses; percentages may also total more than 100 percent, due to the existence of multiple conditions.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

Newly available data on grade retention show that young adults who repeated one or more grades are two times more likely to drop out than young adults who never repeated a grade (19.8 percent versus 9.4 percent) (table 16).[37] And the dropout rates for students who repeated more than one grade are four times the rates for students who did not repeat any grades (40.9 percent versus 9.4 percent).

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[36] In principle, efforts are made by the Bureau of the Census to identify special education students and treat them as not enrolled. However, if special education students are not identified, then they may be reported as completing the 12th grade, but not graduating. They will, by definition, be counted as dropouts.

[37] Increased dropout rates associated with grade retention have also been reported by F. M. Howell and W. Frase, "Early Transitions into Adult Roles: Some Antecedents and Outcomes," *American Educational Research Journal* 19 (1982): 51–73; and R. B. Cairns, B. D. Cairns, and H. J. Neckerman, *Child Development* 60 (1989): 1437–1452.

When it comes to understanding the relationship of grade retention and a decision to drop out, the picture is not clear. Students who repeat a grade may well have an increased likelihood of school failure due to learning ability or problems; but there is no way of discerning the contribution of this effect from the impact of the stigma associated with grade retention. It is the case, however, that the status dropout rates are higher among young adults who were retained in grades seven through nine. Cohort data on reasons dropouts cite for leaving school may further our understanding in this area.

Table 16.—Rate, number, and distribution of status dropouts, ages 16–24, by repetition of grade(s), by highest grade repeated: October 1992

	Status dropout rate	Number of status dropouts (in thousands)	Population (in thousands)	Percent of all dropouts	Percent of population
Total	11.0	3,410	30,944	100.0	100.0
Grade repetition[1]					
No grade repeated	9.4	2,356	25,176	69.1	81.4
Grade(s) repeated[2]	19.8	645	3,256	18.9	10.5
One only	16.8	410	2,441	12.0	7.9
Multiple	40.9	133	324	3.9	1.0
Grades repeated					
Repeated K–6	16.7	316	1,891	9.3	6.1
One only	15.6	278	1,783	8.2	5.8
Multiple	34.2	37	109	1.1	0.4
Repeated 7–9	34.1	236	693	6.9	2.2
One only	28.7	151	526	4.4	1.7
Multiple	51.2	86	168	2.5	0.5
Repeated 10–12	19.1	71	372	2.1	1.2
One only	17.6	55	312	1.6	1.0
Multiple	27.0	16	59	0.5	0.2

[1] Not shown separately are those who did not respond to this item, but who are included in the total.

[2] Not shown separately are those repeaters who did not identify the grade(s) repeated, but who are included in the total.

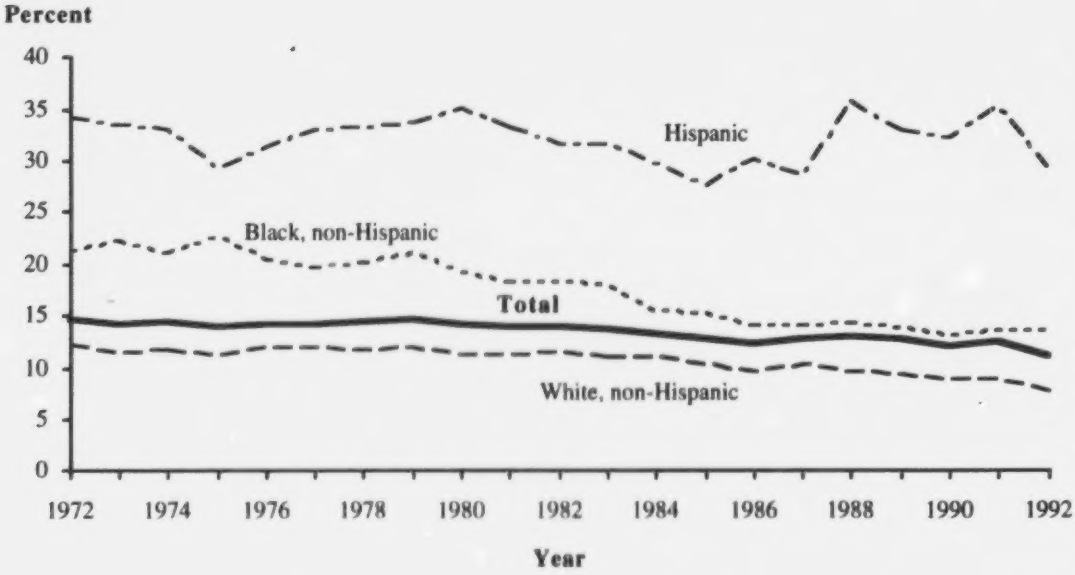
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

Trends over Time

The percentage of young persons who are status dropouts has generally declined over the last two decades (figure 4). During the 1970s, the percent of 16- through 24-year-olds who had not completed high school and were not currently enrolled fluctuated between about 14.0 and 14.5 percent; by 1991 the rate was 12.5 percent.[38] The 1992 rate was down to 11.0 percent.[39]

The same cautions that were discussed in the analysis of trends in the event dropout rate must be applied here. In this case, the change in the method of determining graduation status results in decreases in both the number of status dropouts and the resulting rate. Because this decrease is likely to affect the trend analysis for status dropout rates, firm conclusions about the trends reported this year must await additional data in future years.

Figure 4.—Status dropout rates for persons ages 16–24, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

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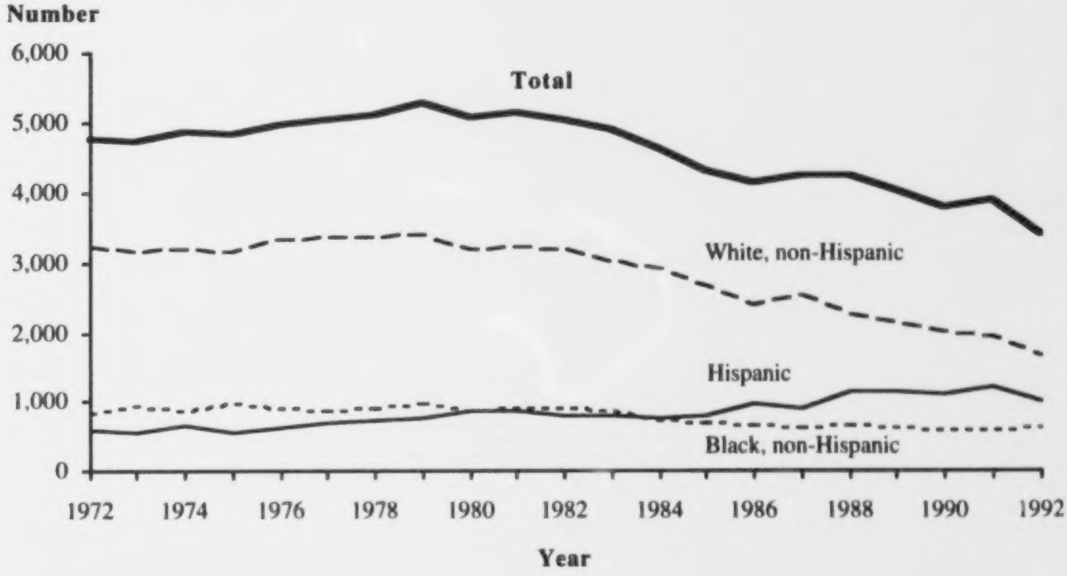
[38] Previous analyses relied on the 12th-grade completion status to identify high school graduates. This year, for the first time, graduation status is based on an explicit question in the CPS about high school graduation. Unlike prior years, in 1992, students who completed the 12th grade and left school without graduation or certification were counted as dropouts. And, students who completed high school before the 12th grade, and students who left school before the 12th grade, never completed the 12th grade, but completed high school by an alternative means, are counted as graduates. This results in an increase in the number of high school graduates. Conversely, both the number of status dropouts and the related rate decrease (see appendix B).

[39] The statistical significance of the trends presented in this section was assessed using weighted least squares regression analyses. For a full discussion of the statistical methods used, see appendix B.

Figure 4 shows that the percentage of blacks who were status dropouts has decreased substantially since the early 1970s (from around 20 percent in the 1970s to 13.6 percent in 1991 and 13.7 percent in 1992). The status dropout rate for whites shows less of a decline (from about 12 percent in the 1970s to about 9 percent in 1990 and 1991 and then 7.7 percent in 1992). Although the year-to-year estimates fluctuate, the Hispanic status rate showed no trend and has been consistently higher than the status rate for whites and blacks.[40]

Hispanics make up an increasing proportion of all dropouts (figure 5), due mainly to the changing composition of the population ages 16 through 24. While the population of whites ages 16 through 24 decreased from approximately 28 million in 1980 to around 21.5 million in 1992, the population of Hispanics ages 16 through 24 increased from approximately 2.5 million in 1980 to around 3.5 million in 1992. The black population of this age range has held constant at approximately 5 million persons. Because Hispanics now make up a larger proportion of the population, Hispanics would constitute a larger proportion of status dropouts even without the decreases in the status dropout rates for whites and blacks.[41]

Figure 5.—Number of status dropouts, ages 16–24, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

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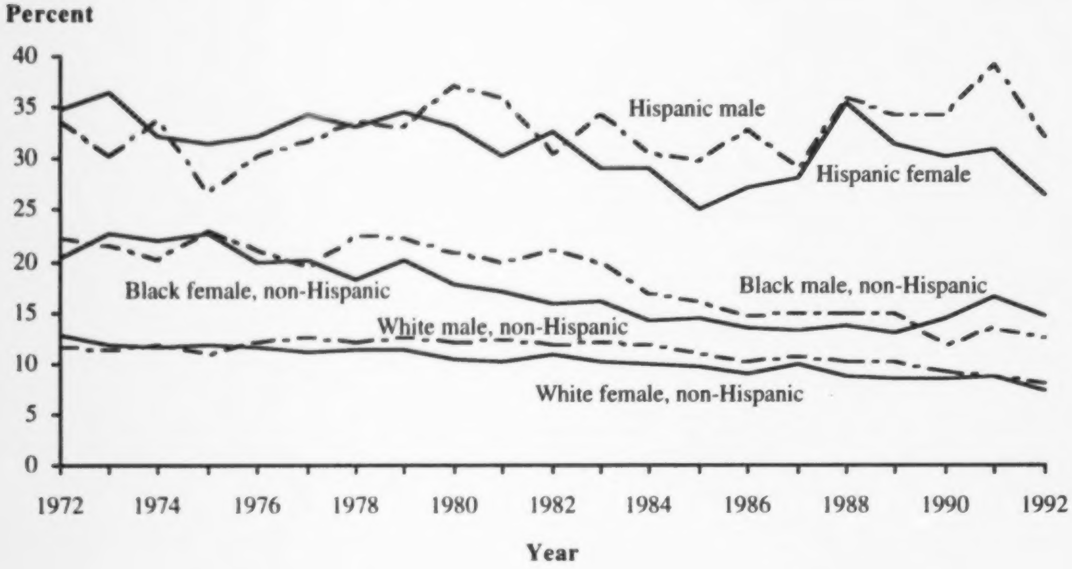
[40] The erratic nature of the Hispanic status rate reflects, in part, the small sample size of Hispanics in CPS.

[41] The impact of an increase in the relative size of the Hispanic population on dropout rates was also discussed by A. M. Pallas, G. Natriello, and E. L. McDill, "The Changing Nature of the Disadvantaged Population: Current Dimensions and Future Trends," *Educational Researcher* 18 (1989): 16–22.

The relationship between white female and white male status rates changed over the last 20 years (figure 6). White female status rates declined from about 12 percent in the early 1970s to about 9 percent in 1990 and 1991 and to 7.4 percent in 1992. White male rates remained fairly constant, fluctuating around 12.0 percent from 1972 to 1984, but have declined since, from 12.0 percent in 1984 to 8.9 percent in 1991 and 8.0 percent in 1992.[42] The status rates of both black males and black females also declined. As was noted for white males, the rate for black males fluctuated during the 1970s and early 1980s, in this case between 20 and 23 percent, with a decline from 20.0 percent in 1983 to 13.5 percent in 1991 and 12.5 percent in 1992. The rate for black females fluctuated between 20 and 23 percent during the 1970s, declined from that level to 13 to 14 percent in the late 1980s, and then was 16.7 percent in 1991 and 14.8 percent in 1992.[43]

Figure 6.—Status dropout rate, ages 16–24, by race–ethnicity and sex: October 1972 through October 1992



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

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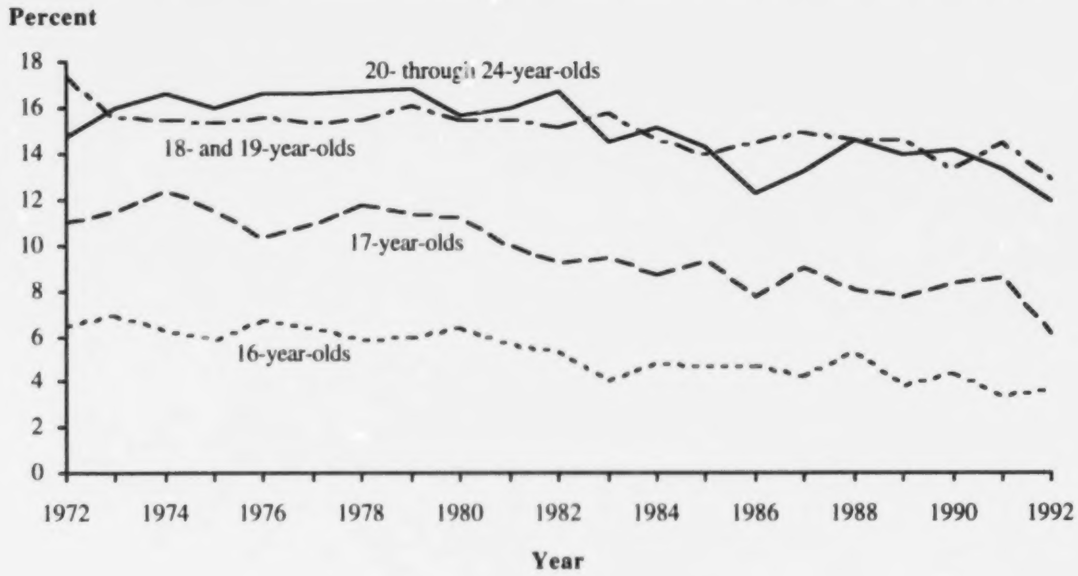
[42] As was shown in some detail in the 1988 dropout report, some of the difference in male and female trends may reflect the influence of the military buildup during the Vietnam War. Since CPS covers only the civilian, noninstitutionalized population, the CPS estimates for the number of 16- through 24-year-old males in the population and the number of male dropouts do not reflect the large proportion of males in this age group in military service during the period 1968–1974.

[43] The status dropout rate for black females appears to have increased in recent years, but the observed differences are not statistically significant.

The decline observed in the aggregate status dropout rate over the last two decades was evident at each age as well (figure 7). In addition, the patterns observed between the ages in the 1992 data are apparent over time as well, with a higher rate at each age from 16 to 17 to 18 and 19. This pattern reflects the experiences of the young adult population as they pass through the years when dropping out is most likely to occur.

Figure 7.—Status dropout rate, ages 16–24, by age group: October 1972 through October 1992



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

The 1992 income differentials in dropout rates were evident over the last decade (figure 8). More specifically, within each income group there were no differences between the status dropout rates of white and black 16- through 24-year-olds. The rates for Hispanic 16- through 24-year-olds appear to be higher than the rates for whites and blacks, especially at the low and middle income levels, but as is the case in other comparisons, the small sample sizes for Hispanics lead to erratic results.[44]

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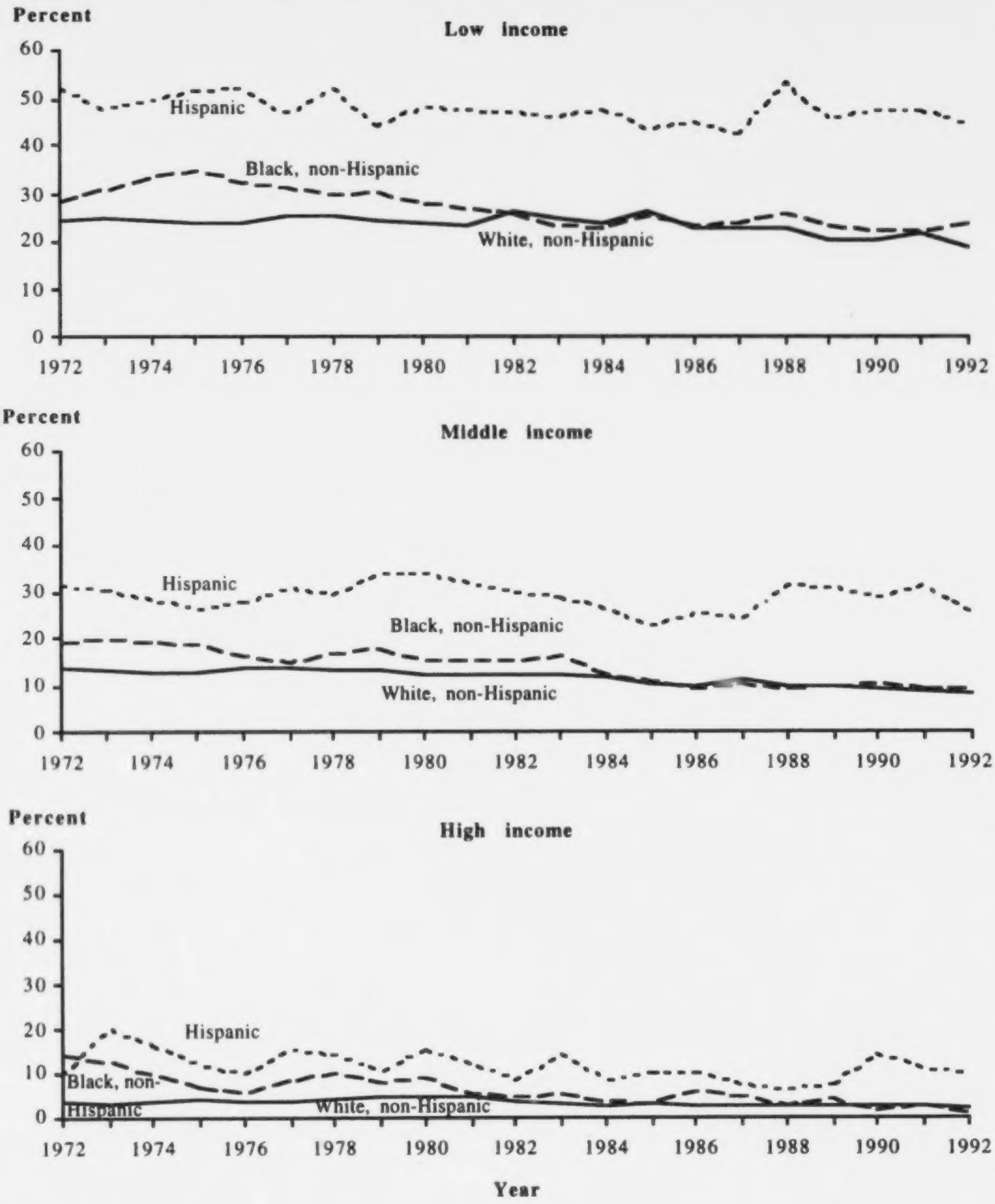
[44] When the entire 2-decade time frame is considered, the data show decreases in the status rates of blacks at each income level, of whites in the middle group, and of Hispanics in the low income group.

Figure 8.—Status dropout rate, ages 16–24, by income[*] and race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992



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[*] Family income in current residence. Low income is defined as the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes for the relevant year; middle income is between 20 and 80 percent of all family incomes; and high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table 17 shows the trends over time for status rates for persons 16–24 years old residing in different regions of the country and for persons residing in central city, suburban, and nonmetropolitan settings. While the status rate decreased in the Northeast, South, and Midwest from 1975 to 1992, there was no evidence of a trend in the West. The rate declined by about 24 percent in the Northeast, 28 percent in the Midwest, and 34 percent in the South. The status rate remained fairly constant in central cities and suburban areas, but decreased in nonmetropolitan areas by 37 percent between 1975 and 1992.

Table 17.—Status dropout rate, ages 16–24, by region and metropolitan status: Selected years, October 1975 through October 1992

	October					
	1975	1980	1985	1990[1]	1991[1]	1992[1,2]
	(percent)					
Total	13.9	14.1	12.6	12.1	12.5	11.0
Region						
Northeast	11.3	10.4	9.9	8.7	9.1	8.6
Midwest	10.9	11.5	9.8	9.1	9.7	7.9
South	18.9	18.2	15.2	14.5	14.1	12.4
West	13.0	14.9	14.6	14.7	15.9	14.4
Metropolitan status						
Central city	15.7	16.9	15.3	15.5	16.3	13.4
Suburban	10.2	11.1	10.0	9.9	9.4	9.6
Nonmetropolitan	16.8	15.3	13.6	11.7	11.3	10.6

[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "School Enrollment—Social and Economic Characteristics of Students, October (various years)," *Current Population Reports*, Series P-20, and unpublished tabulations.

Cohort Rates

Longitudinal or cohort analyses are based on repeated measures of a group of individuals with a set of shared experiences. The initial experience that is used to define the group can be date of birth, age at a particular point in time, entry into school, grade level in school, entry into the military, marriage, or any one of a number of other specific events. These analyses can be done in one of two ways. Consecutive ages or grades taken from existing cross-sectional data across a series of years can be linked together to portray the experiences of an age or grade cohort. This approach can be operationalized using CPS data on enrollments and dropouts. Alternatively, a prospective study can be used to follow the same group of individuals over a number of years. This approach has been used by NCES, where particular grades in school have been selected as the starting points for longitudinal studies of educational processes and experiences.

Cohort Analysis of National Sample Survey Data

Table 18 provides an illustration of cohort dropout rates based on cross-sectional CPS data. In 1980, 11 percent of the 16- through 18-year-old age group were identified as status dropouts. Three years later in 1983 this group was 19, 20, and 21 years old; by that time most of these individuals would have completed high school. The increased dropout rate at ages 19 through 21 (15.6 percent) reflects the dropout rates observed in the cross-sectional event rates for grades 10–12. By 1986, at ages 22 through 24, the dropout rate for this group had declined to about 14 percent; this decrease was most likely a result of delayed decisions to complete high school or an equivalent program.[45]

Table 18.—Status dropout rates for persons ages 16–24, by cohorts: Selected years, October 1974 through October 1992

	Age groups		
Year	16–18	19–21	22–24
1974	11.6	16.4	15.3
1977	11.1	16.3	15.2
1980	11.0 →	16.0	15.2
1983	9.4	→ 15.6 →	15.7
1986[1]	8.0	14.1	→ 14.3
1989[1]	8.8	15.2	13.7
1992[1,2]	7.3	13.1	12.5

[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

The cross-sectional variations noted earlier across age groups and over time are also evident in this table. Comparisons across age groups in each year (rows) show higher rates at ages 19–21 than at ages 16–18. This increase was then followed by a leveling off between ages 19–21 and ages 22–24. The difference here between the cohort and cross-sectional patterns from ages 16 through 24 reflects a fundamental difference between cross-sectional and cohort rates. The cohort approach shows the experience of an age group as the members age. The cross-sectional approach compares the members of several different age groups. Insofar as the experiences of these separate age groups may vary, patterns evident in a cohort (especially emerging patterns) may not be evident in the cross-sectional rates. Time trends for these age groups (columns) reflect an overall tendency towards decreasing dropout rates over time, consistent with the downward trends observed in the aggregate status dropout rate for 16- through 24-year-olds.[46]

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[45] In some cohorts, the rate for the 22- through 24-year-old age group holds constant relative to the rate for the 19- through 21-year-old age group, while in others it declines.

NCES Longitudinal Studies

In the NCES elementary/secondary longitudinal collections, cohort dropout rates are computed that describe the portion of a grade cohort that drops out over a period of successive years. Longitudinal data offer the additional advantage of tracing individual students who drop out and re-enter to provide measures of returning and late high school completion. In addition, to the extent that the previous experiences and behaviors affect individual students' decisions to drop out, a longitudinal data base provides the data necessary to describe the dropouts' background characteristics and educational experiences in a way that is not possible with the cross-sectional CPS data used in the computation of the event and status dropout rates.

The High School and Beyond (HS&B) study began in the spring of 1980 with cohorts of seniors and sophomores. A nationally representative sample of approximately 30,000 sophomores participated in the base-year survey, and subsamples of this cohort were re-surveyed in three spring followups in 1982, 1984, and 1986. In addition, high school transcripts were obtained in 1982 for over half of the sophomore cohort, including all who were identified as dropouts at the time of the spring 1982 followup. Data from this study provide a baseline for comparisons with subsequent longitudinal studies of students and dropouts from American high schools.[47]

The most recent NCES elementary/secondary longitudinal study, the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), is the first NCES longitudinal education study to begin surveying students as early as eighth grade. NELS:88 is based on a nationally representative sample of 24,599 eighth graders and thus provides the unprecedented opportunity to study young dropouts on a national scale. NELS:88 also provides a basis for examining the contextual factors associated with dropping out, especially those related to the school. In addition, it provides data needed to profile the movement of students in and out of school, including alternative high school programs.

Follow-up interviews of eighth-grade base-year students were conducted in the spring of 1990 and again in the spring of 1992. Each student's enrollment status was used to identify enrolled students and dropouts at the time of each followup. Data from the base year and the first and second followups are used in this report in the computation of 1988–90, 1990–92, and 1988–92 cohort dropout rates for the 1988 cohort of eighth graders (see appendix B for a more complete description of the sample and study design.)

In addition, at the time of the first followup in 1990, the NELS:88 sample was freshened to represent the sophomore class of 1990.[48] As a result, cohort rates calculated from the freshened 10th-grade sample from NELS:88 can be used in comparisons with cohort dropout rates from the HS&B sophomore class of 1980.[49]

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[46] Tests of the trends in these data were conducted on all years 1972 through 1991, not just the years presented here.

[47] See M. Frase, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1988*, NCES 89-609, for a full discussion of the cohort dropout rate from the High School and Beyond study.

[48] Additional sample members were selected from individuals who were 1989–90 sophomores but had no chance of selection in the base-year sample either because they were not in the United States or not in the eighth grade at that time. This process of "freshening" provided the NELS:88 first followup with a nationally representative sample of sophomores in 1990.

This process of tracking the education outcomes of a national sample of students will be continued with future followups; during the third followup in 1994, most of the students in this cohort will have completed high school. These longitudinal data will provide an opportunity to study the progress of these students, as they continue on to postsecondary education or enter the labor force.

Rates from NELS:88 1988–1992

Table 19 shows the cohort dropout rates for the eighth-grade class of 1988 for the spring of 1990 and the spring of 1992.[50] Approximately 12 percent of this cohort dropped out of school between the 8th grade and the end of the 12th grade.[51] Data from spring 1990 show that between 1988 and 1990, 6.8 percent of eighth graders in 1988 dropped out of school. And data from spring 1992 show that 7.6 percent of the eighth graders who were still enrolled in the spring of 1990 dropped out between 1990 and 1992.[52]

Male and female students were equally likely to leave school, regardless of the grade intervals considered.[53] Racial and ethnic differences persist. In general, dropout rates for Hispanics and blacks are higher than those for whites and Asians.[54]

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[49] In both HS&B and NELS:88, a subset of students who were not considered capable of completing the questionnaire were deemed ineligible for participation in the study. Inasmuch as no attempt was made to identify and include data from students deemed ineligible in the 1980 HS&B cohort, analyses that compare NELS:88 sophomores with HS&B sophomores should not include data reflecting the experiences of the ineligible students in NELS:88.

[50] Presentation and analyses of the dropout data from 1988–1990 are included in *Eighth- to Tenth-Grade Dropouts*, U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, NCES 92-006; P. Kaufman, M. M. McMillen, E. Germino-Hausken, and D. Bradby, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1991*, NCES 92-129; P. Kaufman, M.M. McMillen, and S. Whitener, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1990*, NCES 91-053; and P. Kaufman and D. Bradby, *Characteristics of At-Risk Students in NELS:88*, NCES 92-042.

[51] Table 19 is based on the full NELS:88 sample plus the sample of base-year ineligibles. Tables 20 and 21 are based solely on the 10th- to 12th-grade freshened sample of the first followup 10th graders who were interviewed in the NELS:88 second followup. See appendix B for details.

[52] Logically, the reader might expect a straightforward arithmetic relationship between the aggregate 1988–1992 rate and the 1988–1990 and 1990–1992 rates. However, because each rate is confounded by migrations and deaths, these rates cannot be used directly to estimate the percentage of dropouts who return. See appendix B for details.

[53] The apparent difference in the male and female rates for 1988–90 is not statistically significant.

[54] Although the Hispanic cohort dropout rates for 1990–92 and 1988–92 seem to exceed the cohort dropout rates for black students, these differences are not statistically significant. While the estimates for Native Americans appear to be higher, the differences between the Native American rate and those for the other groups were not statistically significant, due to the relatively small sample size of Native Americans in the NELS:88 survey. In addition, further analyses of the NELS:88 data indicate that dropout rates are similar for white, black, and Hispanic students within socioeconomic levels. See J. Owings and S. Peng, *Transitions Experienced by 1988 Eighth Graders*, U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (April 1992).

Table 19.—NELS:88 8th- to 12th-grade cohort dropout rates, by sex and race–ethnicity: 1992

	Cohort dropout rate		
	1988–90	1990–92[1]	1988–92
Total	6.8	7.6	11.6
Sex			
Male	7.2	7.6	11.6
Female	6.5	7.6	11.6
Race–ethnicity[2]			
Asian/Pacific Islander	4.0	5.5	7.0
Hispanic	9.6	12.7	18.3
Black, non-Hispanic	10.2	9.6	14.5
White, non-Hispanic	5.2	6.1	9.4
Native American	9.2	19.9	25.4

[1] The denominator for this rate includes the members of the 1988 8th-grade cohort who were still enrolled in school in the spring of 1990; excluded are students who dropped out between 1988 and 1990 and students who migrated out of the country or died.

[2] Not shown separately are 434 persons (approximately 2 percent of the unweighted sample) whose race–ethnicity is unknown.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988–Base-Year, First, and Second Followup Survey, 1988, 1990, and 1992, unpublished data.

Reasons for Dropping Out

The reasons for leaving school reported by dropouts in the NELS:88 second followup were more often school-related than job-related or family-related concerns (table 20).[55] Students who left school between the 10th and 12th grades were just as likely to report dropping out because they "did not like school" (43 percent) as they were because they were failing school (39 percent). Just as many female dropouts as male dropouts said they left because they "could not get along with teachers." However, male dropouts were more likely than female dropouts to report leaving because of school expulsion and suspension.[56]

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[55] Analyses of earlier data from HS&B and from the National Longitudinal Survey–Labor Force Experience in Youth Cohort (NLS–Youth) provide additional evidence of the role of school-related problems, work decisions, and family status in students' decisions to leave school early. See, for example, D. Mann, "Can We Help Dropouts? Thinking About the Undoable," in *School Dropouts: Patterns and Policies*, ed. G. Natriello (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1989): 3–19; G. G. Wehlage and R. R. Rutter, in *School Dropouts: Patterns and Policies*, 70–88; R. W. Rumberger, *American Educational Research Journal* 20 (1983): 199–220; R.W. Rumberger, "High School Dropouts: A Review of Issues and Evidence," *Review of Educational Research* 57 (1987): 107–121; and S. M. Barro and A. Kolstad, *Who Drops Out of High School: Findings from High School and Beyond*, U.S. Department of Education, Center for Education Statistics (1987).

In general, dropouts were more likely to report school-related reasons for leaving school, but female dropouts were more likely than male dropouts to report family-related reasons. Some 21 percent of female dropouts left because they became a parent, compared with only 8 percent of male dropouts. About 27 percent of female dropouts said they left school because they were pregnant—31 percent of Hispanics, 34 percent of blacks, and 26 percent of whites. Black dropouts were far less likely than their peers to have reported "got married" as a reason for dropping out—2 percent compared with 13 percent of Hispanic and 15 percent of white dropouts.

Over one-fourth of the dropouts between the 10th and 12th grades cited job-related reasons for leaving school. About 28 percent reported "found a job" as a reason for leaving school. About 36 percent of male dropouts said they left school because they "found a job" compared with 22 percent of female dropouts.

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[56] Although there appear to be other differences in the reasons for dropping out, none of these are statistically significant due to the relatively small samples of dropouts in the NELS:88 survey.

Table 20.—Percentage of NELS:88 10th- to 12th-grade dropouts who reported that various reasons for dropping out of school applied to them, by sex and race–ethnicity: 1992

		Sex		Race-ethnicity		
	Total	Male	Female	Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	White, non-Hispanic
School-related:						
Did not like school	42.9	43.6	42.2	48.0	28.8	45.5
Could not get along with teachers	22.8	24.6	21.1	24.6	27.8	21.5
Could not get along with students	14.5	17.7	11.6	15.6	18.4	13.6
Did not feel safe at school	6.0	7.0	5.1	8.3	8.5	4.8
Felt I didn't belong	24.2	25.8	22.7	16.0	25.9	26.6
Could not keep up with schoolwork	31.3	32.7	29.9	35.0	25.6	30.3
Was failing school	38.7	43.4	34.5	40.6	39.5	36.6
Changed school and did not like new school	10.6	10.5	10.7	12.3	9.1	10.2
Was suspended/expelled from school	15.5	21.6	10.0	10.1	24.4	15.4
Job-related:						
Could not work and go to school at same time	22.8	26.9	19.1	20.4	15.4	24.6
Found a job	28.5	35.9	21.8	34.1	19.1	27.5
Family-related:						
Had to support family	11.2	10.4	11.9	15.8	11.8	9.9
Wanted to have family	7.5	6.4	8.4	9.1	4.6	8.2
Was pregnant*	26.8	—	26.8	30.6	34.5	25.6
Became parent	14.7	7.7	21.0	19.6	21.0	12.4
Got married	21.1	3.7	19.7	13.4	2.0	15.1
Had to care for family member	11.9	9.5	14.0	8.5	14.7	10.7
Other:						
Wanted to travel	8.1	8.2	8.0	6.6	7.3	7.1
Friends dropped out	8.0	8.5	7.5	7.6	6.7	8.6
Had a drug and/or alcohol problem	4.4	6.1	2.8	1.8	2.1	5.9

—Not applicable.

* Females only.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988—Second Followup Survey, 1992, unpublished data.

Comparison of 8th- to 10th-grade and 10th- to 12th-grade Dropouts' Reasons for Leaving School

Examination of the reasons reported for leaving school from the 8th- to 10th-grade dropout followup and the 10th- to 12th-grade dropout followup showed few differences between the two groups.[57] In general, dropouts from both groups were more likely to report school-related reasons for dropping out (tables 20 and A22). Comparable proportions of dropouts from each group reported leaving school for specific school-related reasons, with one exception. Students leaving school between the 10th and 12th grades were less likely to report "couldn't get along with teachers" as a reason for leaving school compared with students who left school between the 8th and 10th grades.

Dropouts between the 10th and 12th grades were more likely than dropouts between the 8th and 10th grades to report leaving school because of job-related reasons. More dropouts between the 10th and 12th grades reported leaving school because they "found a job" (28 percent versus 15 percent for 8th- to 10th-grade dropouts) and "could not work and go to school at the same time" (23 percent versus 14 percent). In addition, female dropouts between the 10th and 12th grades were more likely than females who left school between the 8th and 10th grades to report "could not work and go to school at the same time" and "found a job" as reasons for leaving school.

Family-related reasons for leaving school between the 10th and 12th grades continue as a major factor for female students, with 27 percent citing pregnancy and 20 percent citing marriage as reasons for dropping out. Although still not as important as school- or job-related reasons, male 10th- to 12th-grade dropouts were also more likely than male 8th- to 10th-grade dropouts to report leaving school to support their family.

Another difference between the two periods was in the proportion of students who reported dropping out because of a desire to travel. Students who left school between the 10th and 12th grades were more likely to report "wanted to travel" as a reason for leaving compared with students who left between the 8th and 10th grades. While about 8 percent of the 10th- to 12th-grade dropouts indicated a desire to travel as a reason for leaving school, about 2 percent of the 8th- to 10th-grade dropouts reported travel as a reason for leaving school.

Comparison of 10th- to 12th-grade Dropouts a Decade Apart

The HS&B sophomore cohort dropout rate for 1980–82 can be compared to the 1990–92 cohort rate for 1990 sophomores in NELS:88 to determine whether there has been a change in the percentage of students who leave school between the sophomore and senior years without completing high school or an equivalent program.[58]

HS&B data from the spring of 1982 show that 10.9 percent of the sophomores in 1980 left school without completing high school or its equivalent by the spring of 1982

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[57] The reasons for leaving school reported by the 8th- to 10th-grade dropouts are found in table A22 in appendix A. While the 10th- to 12th-grade dropouts were not asked if they had to leave school because they "had to get a job," they were asked if they left because they "had a drug or alcohol problem."

[58] The NELS:88 sophomore data appropriate to this analysis are from the freshened cohort described earlier in this section.

(table 21).[59] The comparable NELS:88 rate for the sophomore cohort of 1990 is 6.2 percent. Over the decade there has been a 4.7 percentage point decline in the dropout rate. This amounts to a 43 percent reduction in the cohort dropout rate from the sophomore to the senior years between 1980 to 1982 and 1990 to 1992.

In the HS&B rates, the difference between males (11.6 percent) and females (10.1 percent) is not significant.[60] Similarly, the difference between the NELS:88 1992 rates of 5.7 percent for males and 6.7 percent for females is not significant.

In both 1982 and 1992, the dropout rates for Hispanics were higher than those for whites and Asians. The rates for blacks fell between those of Hispanics and whites, but are not significantly different from the rates for either group. The relative rankings of the racial and ethnic groups did not change over the decade. Each group, except the Asian/Pacific Islanders, appears to have shared in the overall pattern of decline. These declines were statistically significant only for whites and blacks.

Table 21.—HS&B and NELS:88 10th- to 12th-grade cohort dropout rates, by sex and race–ethnicity: 1982 and 1992

	Cohort dropout rate	
	HS&B 1980–82	NELS:88 1990–92
Total	10.9	6.2
Sex		
Male	11.6	5.7
Female	10.1	6.7
Race–ethnicity*		
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.8	4.2
Hispanic	15.6	12.1
Black, non-Hispanic	12.6	7.9
White, non-Hispanic	9.7	5.0
Native American	22.1	16.6

* Not shown separately are those included in the total whose race–ethnicity is unknown.

SOURCES: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, High School and Beyond Study, Sophomore cohort, First Followup Survey, 1982, unpublished data. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988–First and Second Followup Surveys, 1990 and 1992, unpublished data.

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[59] Previous analyses of HS&B data from the spring 1982 followup counted students who had enrolled in alternative programs to prepare for a high school equivalency test or who had completed high school by an alternative means as dropouts. See S. M. Barro and A. Kolstad, *Who Drops Out of High School? Findings from High School and Beyond* (1987); and A. Pallas, "School Dropouts in the United States," *Issue Paper*, U.S. Department of Education, Center for Education Statistics (1987). The analysis presented here treats them as students or completers.

[60] Earlier analyses of the HS&B data found that between the 10th and 12th grades, males were more likely to drop out than females. When the GED is taken into consideration, this is not the case.

Student reports of reasons for leaving are one tool administrators and policymakers can use in developing effective policies and practices for preventing students from dropping out and drawing dropouts back to complete their educations. In 1992, school-related problems were identified by the most dropouts. About 40 percent of the 1992 students who dropped out between the 10th and 12th grades gave not liking school or was failing school as one reason for leaving school.[61]

In 1982, about 30 percent of the 10th- to 12th-grade dropouts identified not liking school or failing school (or having poor grades) as reasons for dropping out (table 22). This amounts to a 33 percent increase in the percent of dropouts reporting these reasons among the factors contributing to their decisions. Several other school-related reasons—"could not get along with other students," "could not get along with their teachers," and "expelled or suspended"—increased in importance over the decade as well.

Given the importance among females of family-related reasons for leaving school, the significance of pregnancy and marriage were compared over the decade. In 1992, about 27 percent of the female dropouts included pregnancy on the list of reasons for leaving school, and 20 percent of them included marriage. Ten years earlier, 23 percent of the female dropouts listed pregnancy and 35 percent included marriage on their lists of reasons. Over the decade, leaving school because of marriage decreased by about 40 percent, and the apparent increase in pregnancy does not represent a statistically significant change.[62]

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[61] While not all of the items on the 1992 list of reasons were replicated from the 1982 list, most of the school-related reasons were on both lists.

[62] Since the students identified all reasons contributing to their dropout decision, changes in the percentage reporting an individual item or any group of items does not necessarily reflect a change in the dropout rates. More than likely, the increases here reflect that individual students report more reasons as contributing factors.

Table 22.—Percentage of HS&B 1980 sophomore cohort dropouts who reported that various reasons for dropping out of school applied to them, by sex and race–ethnicity: 1982

		Sex		Race-ethnicity		
	Total	Male	Female	Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	White, non-Hispanic
School-related:						
Did not like school	30.0	30.2	28.5	24.7	14.9	34.8
Could not get along with teachers	15.4	19.2	10.9	14.7	13.7	16.1
Could not get along with students	6.4	6.3	6.5	6.5	5.5	6.5
Was suspended/expelled from school	10.7	16.1	4.5	11.1	14.0	10.0
Had poor grades/was failing school	31.4	35.0	27.1	37.8	25.8	32.1
Family-related:						
Was pregnant*	22.9	—	22.9	25.2	34.4	19.8
Got married	19.9	7.3	34.7	20.2	5.0	22.8

—Not applicable.

* Females only.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, High School and Beyond study, sophomore cohort, First Followup Survey, 1982, unpublished data.

Discussion

Just under 12 percent of the 8th-grade class of 1988 dropped out of school between 1988 and 1992. When asked why they left school early, some of the most common reasons cited for dropping out were related to their experiences in the schools they left behind. In addition, about one-quarter of the female dropouts said they left school because they were pregnant. And 36 percent of the male and 22 percent of the female dropouts left school because they found a job.

The proportion of students who left school without finishing was not significantly different between the 8th- to 10th-grade (6.8 percent) and the 10th- to 12th-grade (7.6 percent) intervals. After re-enrollments, alternative completers, and early graduates were taken into account, the cohort dropout rate for the spring of 1992 amounted to 11.6 percent of the eighth-grade cohort of 1988. Regardless of the time intervals considered, the dropout rates for males and females from the 1988 eighth-grade cohort were comparable. In contrast, race–ethnicity differences were evident in each set of cohort dropout rates—with higher rates for Hispanics and blacks and lower rates for whites and Asians.

Comparisons drawn between the 1990 sophomore cohort and the 1980 sophomore cohort show that some improvements have occurred over the last decade. The cohort dropout rate decreased by 43 percent. However, the fact remains: a significant number of

American students continue to leave school without completing a high school education. The longitudinal aspect of these data provide the information needed to follow the progress of these youth—to monitor how many of them eventually complete high school, continue their education, and assume productive roles in American society.

Summary

The rate at which students drop out each year and the proportion of dropouts within the young adult population declined over the last 10 to 15 years. The event rate, measured as the percentage of students ages 15–24 dropping out of grades 10–12 each year, declined almost three percentage points—from 6.7 percent in 1978 to around 4.0 percent in the 1990s. Grade- and age-specific event dropout rates declined over most of the period. The status rate, measured as the percentage of all 16- through 24-year-olds who left school without completing high school, fell from approximately 14 percent in the 1970s to 11 percent in 1992.

Analyses of dropout rates by selected demographic characteristics reveal generally consistent patterns in 1992 across the three types of national dropout rates—event, status, and cohort. In particular, male and female dropout rates were comparable and dropout rates decrease markedly as family income goes up, with a tenfold difference between the dropout rates of students from families with low as compared with high incomes. The status dropout rates were the same for whites and blacks within each income level, and Hispanic rates were higher than the rates of whites and blacks. Persons living in central cities, and in the southern or western regions were more likely to be status dropouts.

Even though the data indicate that dropout rates declined over the last decade, it is important to emphasize that the dropout problem continues, and important subgroup differences persist. During 1992, students in large numbers continued to drop out of high school without obtaining a diploma or an alternative credential. About 12 percent of the entire eighth-grade class of 1988 dropped out of school by the spring of 1992, while about 15 percent of black and 18 percent of Hispanic eighth graders dropped out. The number of dropouts is increased multifold when the combined effect of successive years' annual event rates are translated into a status dropout rate. For example, in 1992 there were 383,000 "new" dropout events among 15- through 24-year-olds in grades 10–12, and approximately 3.4 million 16- through 24-year-olds did not have a high school diploma and were not enrolled in school. Black and Hispanic youth are disproportionately represented in the dropout population. Eighty percent of the Hispanic dropouts speak Spanish at home. For those who speak limited English or none at all, the outlook is especially bleak—with dropout rates over 60 percent.

HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION AND GRADUATION RATES

It is important to know what proportion of young people are finishing high school, inasmuch as it is generally agreed that a high school education is a necessary prerequisite to assuming an entry level position in the workforce or military or to continuing on in some formal postsecondary educational program. Over the last 20 years the event dropout rate ranged from a high of 6.7 percent at several points during the 1970s to recent rates around 4.0 percent. These data indicate that in each of the last 20 years, between 93 and 96 percent of the 15- through 24-year-olds enrolled in grades 10, 11, or 12 remained in school each year with the goal of continuing their progress toward high school completion (figure 1, appendix table A32). How many students attain that goal?

What Does it Mean to Graduate?

There are two major paths to high school completion. Most students receive a regular high school diploma after completing the requisite secondary school coursework. However, other students, regardless of the number of high school courses they have completed, receive an alternative credential such as a General Educational Development (GED) certificate, certificate of completion, or certificate of attendance. Data from the High School and Beyond study show that a substantial number of high school completers hold alternative credentials. For example, in 1986 almost 7 percent of the high school completers from the high school class of 1982 held alternative credentials.[63] Strictly speaking, a high school graduation rate is based solely on students receiving regular high school diplomas. Alternatively, a high school completion rate can be calculated by combining data for students receiving regular high school diplomas with data for students receiving alternative credentials.

Who Is Included?

There is also a question of whom to include in the base population. Since there are persons well into their 30s and 40s working to complete high school, the age group that is chosen will affect the graduation or completion rate for two reasons. First, students may take longer than the norm to finish high school because they repeat courses or grades, because of illness or injury, or because they started school at an older age than other students. Second, over time, some subset of the dropouts will complete their high school educations. Using an older rather than a younger age group as a base will generally produce higher graduation and completion rates.

The proportion of high school students who were older than traditional graduation age varied by sex and race–ethnicity (table 23). In 1992, about 28 percent of all 18-year-olds were still enrolled in high school. Within the 18-year-old population, males and blacks were more likely to be in high school than females and whites.[64] By age 19, only 6 percent of the population were enrolled in high school, and at that age blacks and Hispanics were more likely to be in high school than were whites.

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[63] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, High School and Beyond study, sophomore cohort, Third Followup. 1986, unpublished data.

[64] The differences between Hispanics and whites were not statistically significant, due in part to the small sample size of Hispanics in CPS.

Table 23.—Percentage of persons in high school by sex, race–ethnicity, and age: October 1992

	Age				
	18	19	20	21	22
Total	27.9	6.4	1.8	0.8	0.5
Sex					
Male	34.3	7.4	2.1	0.8	0.6
Female	21.1	5.4	1.6	0.8	0.3
Race–ethnicity*					
White, non-Hispanic	24.4	3.6	1.2	0.3	0.2
Black, non-Hispanic	38.8	13.0	1.9	2.0	1.4
Hispanic	34.1	15.3	5.1	2.8	1.6

* Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

High school completion rates computed as a percent of an entire age group include students who are still enrolled in school in the denominator of the rate. The difference between 100 percent and the completion rate is the percent of students who have not completed high school. But, in this case, some of the noncompleters are still enrolled, working toward high school completion. This can be taken into account by computing the rate as a percent of the population not currently enrolled. This second set of completion rates tends to be higher.

The larger the size of the enrolled population, the larger the difference between rates computed with each of the two denominators. For example, the 1992 completion rate for 17- and 18-year-olds was only 34.5 percent when students still enrolled were included in the denominator, but increased to 77.8 percent when the rate was computed as a percent of the 17- and 18-year-olds not currently enrolled in high school or below. The difference is not nearly as pronounced at ages 19 and 20 years. In this case, the percent of high school completers is 83.3 percent for all 19- and 20-year-olds and 86.5 percent for the 19- and 20-year-olds who are not currently enrolled in school. Only a small number of students are still enrolled in school at ages 21 and 22. Thus, the selection of this group as the age reference group for high school graduation and completion minimizes the effect of late enrollments.[65]

Completion and Graduation Rates

There are event, cohort, and status completion rates that are analogs to the event, cohort, and status dropout rates. The event dropout rate compares the number of students dropping out during a 12-month period to the number of students present at the beginning of the period to measure the proportion of students who drop out in that period without completing high school. The comparable event graduation rate compares the number of students who graduate at the end of a school year (or the following summer) to the number of students eligible to graduate, assuming a successful completion, at the start of the year. Data from the NCES 1990–91 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) show an event graduation rate of 93 percent for seniors in the spring of 1990.[66]

The cohort dropout rate measures what happens to a single group (or cohort) of students over a period of time by comparing the number of students who have left school prior to completion to the number of students present in the group at the start of the study period in question. The comparable cohort graduation rate compares the number of students who graduate to the number of students present at the start of the study period. Some members of the NELS:88 eighth-grade cohort were enrolled in high school after 1992; nevertheless, data from 1992 show that 88.4 percent of the NELS:88 eighth-grade cohort were enrolled and working toward graduation in the spring of 1992. Similar data from the High School and Beyond 1980 sophomore cohort reveal that 83.4 percent of this cohort actually graduated on time at the end of their senior year. By 1986, an additional 8.2 percent of the original cohort earned either a high school diploma or the equivalent, for a cohort completion rate of 91.6 percent.[67]

The status dropout rate measures the proportion of individuals in a specified age range who are dropouts by comparing the number of persons of those ages who have not completed high school but are not still enrolled to the total number of persons in that age group. The comparable status graduation rate or completion rate compares the number of graduates or completers in a specified age range to the number of persons out of school in that age group. The high school completion rate can be obtained from the status dropout rate and the high school enrollment rate by subtracting the sum of these two rates from 100 percent. Data from the October Current Population Survey (CPS) are used in this section to compute status completion and graduation rates.

High School Completion Rates: 1992

The data in table 24 show the high school completion rate, the school enrollment rate, and the status dropout rate for persons ages 21 and 22 in 1992. These three rates, each expressed as a percentage of the total 21- through 22-year-old population in 1992, sum to 100 percent. In 1992, less than 1 percent (0.6 percent) of the 21- and 22-year-olds were enrolled in high school. Approximately 86 percent of this age group had completed their high school education, and the remaining 13.2 percent had dropped out.

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[65] High school completion rates are reported in appendix C for each age group, as a percent of the age group and as a percent of the age group not currently enrolled in high school.

[66] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Schools and Staffing Survey, 1990–91, Schools and Staffing in the United States: Selected Data for Public and Private Schools, 1990–91*, E.D. Tabs, NCES 93-453.

[67] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *High School and Beyond, Educational Experiences of the 1980 Sophomore Class, Tabulation*, November 1987.

Table 24.—High school completion and enrollment status of 21- and 22-year-olds: October 1990 through October 1992

	Year		
	1990	1991	1992*
Completed	86.1	85.7	86.0
Enrolled in high school	0.8	0.6	0.6
Dropped out	13.1	13.5	13.2

*Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table 25 shows the 1992 high school completion rates by the demographic characteristics of 21- and 22-year-olds. The 86 percent completion rate observed for all 21- and 22-year-olds is shared equally by males and females, but not by the members of different racial–ethnic groups or income levels. The completion rates for 21- and 22-year-olds were higher for white students than for black and Hispanic students and higher for black students than for Hispanic students. The 96.1 percent completion rate for 21- and 22-year-olds in families with high incomes (top 20 percent) is 10 percentage points above the average of 86 percent. The completion rate for 21- and 22-year-olds in families with middle incomes is comparable to the average rate. The completion rate of 73.7 percent for 21- and 22-year-olds in families with low income (bottom 20 percent) is substantially below the average. When region of the country is taken into consideration, the completion rates for the Midwest and the Northeast are higher than the rates for the West and the South.

Table 25.—Completion rates and number and distribution of completers, ages 21 and 22, by sex, race–ethnicity, income, and region: October 1992

	Completion rate (percent)	Number of completers (thousands)	Percent of all completers
Total	86.0	6,249	100.0
Sex			
Male	85.6	3,073	49.2
Female	86.3	3,173	50.8
Race–ethnicity[1]			
White, non-Hispanic	90.2	4,670	74.7
Black, non-Hispanic	81.0	828	13.3
Hispanic	62.6	488	7.8
Family income[2]			
Low income level	73.7	1,174	18.8
Middle income level	86.8	3,551	56.8
High income level	96.1	1,522	24.4
Region			
Northeast	88.7	1,230	19.7
Midwest	91.2	1,592	25.5
South	83.9	2,132	34.1
West	81.1	1,292	20.7

[1] Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

[2] Family income in current residence. Low income is defined as the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes for 1992; middle income is between 20 and 80 percent of all family incomes; and high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes.

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

By definition, the completion rate includes everyone reporting a high school diploma or the equivalent, regardless of type of credential. Currently, the October Supplement to CPS asks high school completers 24 years of age and under whether they have an equivalency certificate.[68] In October 1992, 80.5 percent of persons 21 and 22 years old reported having received a high school diploma (table 26). An additional 5.5 percent in this age group reported completing high school by passing an equivalency test (such as a GED). Comparable data are presented for each racial–ethnic group. The race–ethnicity difference noted in the completion rates are repeated by 21- and 22-year-olds receiving high school diplomas, but there are no significant differences between the groups in the percent with alternative methods of completion.

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[68] The item on the education supplement is "Did you complete high school by means of an equivalency test, such as a GED?"

Table 26.—High school completion rates and method of completion of 21- and 22-year-olds, by race–ethnicity[1]: October 1990 through October 1992

Completion method	Year		
	1990	1991	1992[2]
		(percent)	
Total			
Completed	86.1	85.7	86.0
Diploma	81.0	81.4	80.5
Alternative	5.2	4.3	5.5
White, non-Hispanic			
Completed	90.5	90.2	90.2
Diploma	85.6	85.8	85.1
Alternative	4.9	4.3	5.1
Black, non-Hispanic			
Completed	83.3	81.2	81.0
Diploma	77.8	75.9	73.6
Alternative	5.5	5.3	7.4
Hispanic			
Completed	61.1	61.1	62.6
Diploma	56.1	57.9	56.4
Alternative	5.0	3.2	6.2

[1] Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Returning to and/or Completing School

Data from the longitudinal studies show that the decision to drop out in many cases does not mean an end to the student's education. In fact, when a cohort of students is followed across time, a substantial portion of the dropouts are found to complete their high school education. Data from the 1986 (third) followup of HS&B indicate that 17.3 percent of the 1980 sophomore cohort did not finish high school by the end of their scheduled senior year. However, 46 percent of that group had earned either a high school diploma or the equivalent by 1986.[69]

By the spring of 1992, 88.4 percent of the eighth-grade cohort of 1988 were either enrolled in school working towards high school completion or had already completed high school or passed an equivalency test (table 27). While most of the students working towards high school completion were enrolled at the time of both the 1990 and 1992 spring followups, about 2 percent are students who dropped out between the 8th and 10th grades and then re-enrolled before the spring of 1992.

Another 6.5 percent of the students from the eighth-grade cohort are not currently enrolled, but report plans to return to school for a regular high school diploma (1.9 percent) or a high school equivalency certificate (4.6 percent). The remaining 5.0 percent either have no plans to return (1.1 percent) or did not provide a response to the question (3.9 percent).

Table 27.— **Percentage distribution of NELS:88 eighth-grade cohort, by educational status and educational plans: 1992**

	Cohort rate
Total	100.0
Students (continuing students, early completers, GED completers, and alternative students)	86.6
Re-enrolled*	1.8
Dropouts	11.6
Plan to return to high school	1.9
Plan to get GED	4.6
No plans	1.1
Unknown status due to item non-response	3.9

* Includes 0.8 percent in regular programs and 1.0 percent in alternative programs.

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988—Second Followup Survey, 1992, unpublished data.

There are several alternatives open to dropouts who decide they want to complete their high school education. The 1992 CPS included data on education program participation over the previous 12 months for everyone age 16 or above who was not currently enrolled in grade 12 or below. Within the group of 16- through 24-year-olds who had not graduated and were not currently enrolled (status dropouts), 15.0 percent were enrolled in some type of educational program at some point during the previous 12 months (table 28).[70] Approximately 4 percent of the dropouts were enrolled as full-time students, 1.5 percent were enrolled part-time in a degree-seeking program at a college or university, and 7.4 percent were enrolled in non-degree programs. Students in non-degree programs were in a variety of programs: basic skills; continuing education; employer-, neighborhood, or community-sponsored programs; or English as a Second Language.

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[69] See M. Frase, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1988* NCES 89-609, for a full discussion of the cohort rate from High School and Beyond.

Table 28.— **Percentage and number of status dropouts, ages 16–24, enrolled in any education program in the last 12 months: October 1992**

	Percentage of status dropouts	Number of status dropouts (in thousands)
Total	100.0	3,410
Enrolled in one or more programs	15.0	512
Enrolled as a part-time student at a college or university in a degree-seeking program	1.5	51
Enrollment in one or more non-degree programs	7.4	252
Continuing education	2.8	94
Courses via mail, television, radio, or newspaper	0.6	21
Private instruction/tutoring	0.5	17
Employer-, neighborhood-, or community-sponsored program	2.4	81
Basic skills instruction	2.9	100
English as a Second Language	1.8	62
Other organized educational activities	1.1	36
Enrolled as a full-time student*	3.5	118

* Full-time enrollment was not included for current year (event) dropouts, since it is likely to reflect program participation prior to dropping out. The following are included among the full-time programs: elementary or secondary school, post high school vocational or occupational training program, English as a Second Language program, adult literacy or basic skills program, associate degree program, and bachelor degree program.

NOTES: Not shown separately are those who did not respond to these items, but who are included in the total. Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding, or to missing responses; percentages may also total more than 100 percent, due to the existence of multiple enrollments.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

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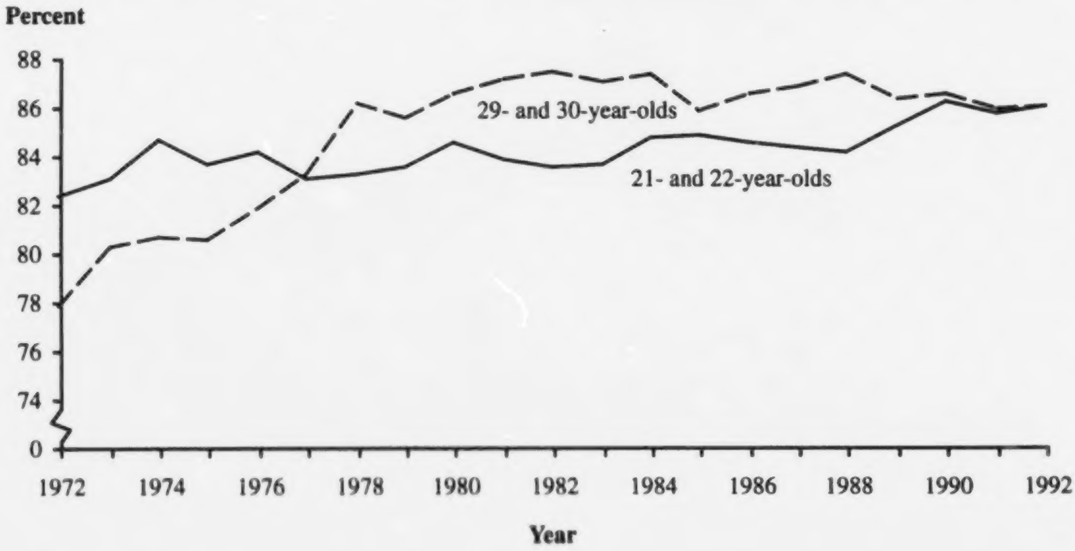
[70] Full-time enrollment was not included for current year (event) dropouts, since it is likely to reflect program participation prior to dropping out. The following are included among the full-time programs: elementary or secondary school, postsecondary vocational or occupational training program, English as a Second Language program, adult literacy or basic skills program, associate degree program, and bachelor degree program.

Trends over Time

CPS began differentiating between completers with diplomas and those with alternative credentials in 1988. Therefore, only completion rates can be used to examine trends over time in high school completion. Consequently, estimates of the number and proportion of high school completers in the trend data from CPS will be higher than estimates based solely on measures of regular high school graduates.

Figure 9 shows the trends over time for the high school completion rates for 21- and 22-year-olds and for 29- and 30-year-olds. These completion rates are defined as the percentage of persons ages 21 and 22 (or ages 29 and 30) who have completed high school by receiving a high school diploma or an equivalency certificate. The completion rate for the 21- and 22-year-olds increased gradually over the last 20 years from approximately 82 percent in 1972 to about 86 percent in 1990, with rates remaining at that level between 1990 and 1992. Over this same time interval, the rate for 29- and 30-year-olds increased from about 78 percent in 1972 to around 87 percent in the early 1980s, with fluctuations between 86 and 87 percent between 1982 and 1992.

Figure 9.—High school completion rates for persons of selected ages, by age group: October 1972 through October 1992



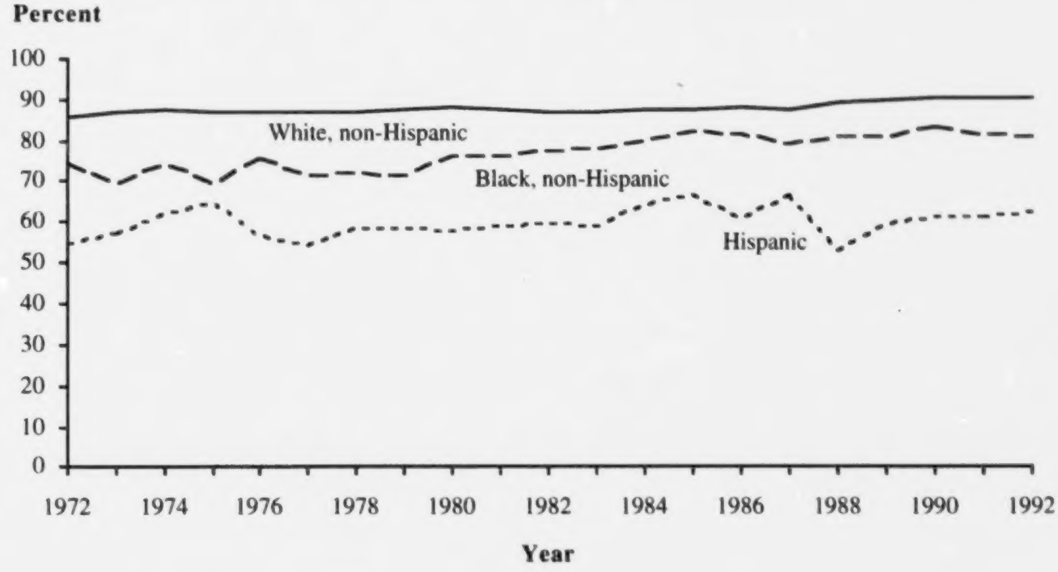
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

A cohort approach can be used to evaluate the contribution of late completions to the total completion rate. A comparison of the rate for the 29- and 30-year-olds with the rate for 21- and 22-year-olds 8 years earlier shows the increase in high school completion as this cohort ages. For example, in 1984 the high school completion rate for 21- and 22-year-olds was 84.6 percent; by 1992 the completion rate for this cohort was 86.0 percent (see appendix table A48).

Trends in the completion rates for white and black 21- and 22-year-olds (figure 10) and 29- and 30-year-olds (figure 11) show larger increases for blacks than for whites, narrowing the difference between the two groups. Completion rates for white 21- and 22-year-olds increased from approximately 85 percent in 1972 to approximately 90 percent in 1989 and have remained at that level. Completion rates for black 21- and 22-year-olds increased from approximately 74 percent in 1972 to about 80 percent in 1984 and have fluctuated between 80 and 83 percent in the intervening years. The completion rates for Hispanic 21- and 22-year-olds evidence no apparent statistical trend, but are consistently lower than comparable rates for whites and blacks over these two decades.

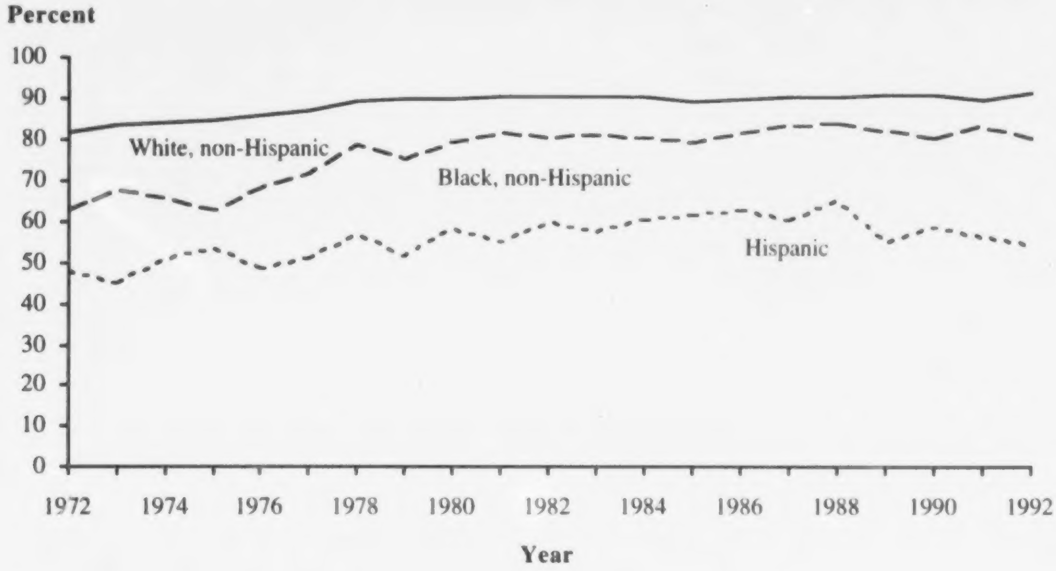
The completion rate for white 29- and 30-year-olds increased from about 82 percent in 1972 to about 91 percent in 1984—an increase of about 11 percent, and has remained relatively constant since (figure 11). The completion rate for black 29- and 30-year-olds increased from approximately 63 percent in 1972 to about 80 percent in 1984—an increase of 27 percent and has remained relatively constant since. The completion rate for Hispanic 29- and 30-year-olds increased from about 48 percent in 1972 to about 60 percent in 1984 and has decreased since then to 54 percent in 1992.

Figure 10.—High school completion rates for all 21- and 22-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Figure 11.—High school completion rates for all 29- and 30-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Summary and Discussion

The high school completion rate for 21- and 22-year-olds increased over the last 20 years from about 82 percent in 1972 to 86 percent in 1992. In 1972, about 74 percent of black 21- and 22-year-olds and approximately 85 percent of white 21- and 22-year-olds completed high school. Over time, the relative increase in the rate for blacks was larger than the increase evident in the rate for whites, thus narrowing the race differential in high school completion rates. By 1992, about 81 percent of black 21- and 22-year-olds and approximately 90 percent of white 21- and 22-year-olds completed high school.

The high school completion rate for 29- and 30-year olds increased markedly from about 78 percent in 1972 to around 87 percent in the early 1980s, and has remained level over the past decade. The rate for black 29- and 30-year-olds increased 17 percentage points between 1972 and 1984, from approximately 63 percent in 1972 to about 80 percent in 1984. The rate for white 29- and 30-year-olds increased 9 percentage points over this time interval, from about 82 percent in 1972 to approximately 91 percent in 1984. Since 1984 the rate for black 29- and 30-year-olds has fluctuated between 80 and 84 percent and the rate for whites in this age group varied between 89 and 91 percent. The rates for Hispanics in this age group are substantially lower, with the rates fluctuating between 54 and 59 percent since 1990.

Institutional data from schools and cross-sectional surveys (e.g., the Schools and Staffing Survey) can be used to compute event rates for graduates or completers in a given year. Also, longitudinal data (in the High School and Beyond and the National Education

Longitudinal Studies) provide the data needed for cohort estimates of the proportion of students from a particular grade level who graduate on time, late, or after returning from an interruption in schooling.[71] Approximately 17 percent of the sophomore cohort of 1980 did not successfully complete high school on time. By 1986, nearly one-half of those students had earned either a high school diploma or the equivalent. As of the spring of 1992, about 88 percent of the students from the 1988 eighth-grade cohort were either enrolled in school working towards high school completion or had already completed high school or passed an equivalency test. Among the dropouts from this group (11.6 percent of the eighth graders), over one-half reported plans to get a GED or complete regular high school.

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[71] Data from the High School and Beyond study indicate that a substantial proportion of dropouts return to school. See the chapter "Returning to School" presented in M. Frase, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1988*, NCES 89-609, for an extended discussion of these students.

STATUS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE NCES DROPOUT DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING EFFORTS

NCES has made a great deal of progress over the last several years in developing reliable and policy-relevant data on school dropouts. This section discusses four NCES surveys and a forthcoming report that are designed to provide extensive and accurate dropout data in the near future. These data will include the additional information needed to monitor progress towards curbing dropout rates and, conversely, towards increasing the relative size of the group of young adults prepared for a lifetime of learning. In particular, the Common Core of Data dropout collection will provide national-, state-, and district-level dropout rates for the entire public school population and for various subgroups. Ongoing administrations of the 1980 High School and Beyond study and the 1988 National Education Longitudinal Study will provide data on the percentage of dropouts who successfully obtain a high school diploma or its equivalent, as well as data on the occupational status of dropouts. The National Household Education Survey can provide important contextual data on the at-risk factors for students dropping out of school. And the 1990 Decennial Census data will provide dropout data that reflect the experiences of young adults living in households in each state and school district.

Common Core of Data

The Common Core of Data (CCD) administered by NCES is an annual universe survey of the state-level education agencies in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the outlying areas. Statistical information is collected on public schools, staff, students, and finance.

A field test of dropout data collection took place in 27 states and two territories (a total of approximately 300 school districts) during the 1989–90 school year. The data were gathered through administrative records maintained at school districts and schools. The data did not produce national (or state) representative statistics, but instead provided information needed to design a dropout statistics component that was added to the CCD.

In that CCD collection, a school dropout was defined as an individual who was enrolled in school at some time during the previous school year, was not enrolled at the beginning of the current school year, had not graduated from high school or completed an approved educational program (event dropouts), and did not meet any of the following exclusionary conditions:

- death;
- temporary absence due to suspension or illness; or
- transfer to another public school district, private school, or a state- or district-approved education program.[72]

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[72] This statistical definition was examined in the field test as the basis for collecting comparable national and state dropout data. It is similar to the definition developed for the purposes of the School Dropout Demonstration Assistance Program, established under Sec. 6201(a) of the Hawkins-Stafford School Improvement Amendments.

For the purpose of this definition:

- a school year is the 12-month period of time beginning with the normal opening of school in the fall, with dropouts from the previous summer reported for the year in which they fail to enroll;
- an individual has graduated from high school or completed an approved education program upon receipt of formal recognition from school authorities;
- a state- or district-approved education program may include special education programs, home-based instruction, and school-sponsored GED preparation.

This new collection was initiated with a set of instructions to State CCD Coordinators in the summer of 1991. Those instructions specified the details of the dropout data to be collected during the 1991–92 school year. Dropouts, like graduates, are reported for the preceding school year. These data, along with expanded reports of the numbers of students of each race–ethnicity by grade of school, were scheduled for submission to NCES as a component of the data collection for the 1992–93 school year.

Taken together, these data form the basis of the beginning of an annual universe-based collection of dropout data for the United States. The data from the first year of collection are being reviewed and processed at this time. The results of this first year of dropout data collection will be published in November 1993. Over the course of the data collection and reporting period there have been numerous discussions between State CCD Coordinators and NCES staff concerning definitions, data availability, and the computation of dropout rates.

Based on current experiences from this first year of data collection, NCES staff anticipate that for the 1992–93 school year the dropout data submissions from 47 states, the District of Columbia, and the five territories will be in substantial agreement with the requested format. During the first year, 37 states, the District of Columbia, and the five territories indicated that they have reported data in the format requested. Another 10 states have submitted partial reports as they work towards implementing this new component to the CCD collection. Of the four remaining states, two are working toward implementation, but have not submitted a projected target date.

The dropout statistics will make it possible to report the number and rate of event dropouts from public schools by school districts, states, major subpopulations, and the nation. Data will be collected by grade for grades 7–12 and by sex within race–ethnicity categories. Dropouts from both regular and special education will be included in the counts, but not reported separately.

Longitudinal Studies

High School and Beyond (HS&B) is the NCES national longitudinal study of 1980 high school seniors and sophomores. HS&B is representative of the nation's high school sophomores of 1980 (for Census regions as well as nationally) with substantial oversampling of special populations. Approximately 30,000 sophomores, selected from a probability sample of 1,015 high schools, participated in the base-year survey. Students completed questionnaires and took a battery of cognitive tests. A subsample of the sophomore cohort was re-surveyed in the spring of 1982 (first followup) and 2,000 students were identified as dropouts. Further followups were conducted in the springs of 1984 (second followup), 1986 (third followup), and 1992 (fourth followup). High school transcripts were obtained in 1982 for more than half the sophomore cohort and college transcripts were obtained in 1992.

The National Education Longitudinal Study of the eighth-grade cohort of 1988 was described earlier in this report, along with the presentation of 1988 to 1992 cohort dropout rates. High school transcripts from this cohort are in processing at this time. This cohort will be re-surveyed in 1994.

These two studies provide the data needed for cohort estimates of the proportion of students from a particular grade level who graduate on time, late, or after returning from an interruption in schooling. These data sets allow analysts to examine not only high school graduation and completion rates for specific cohorts and the characteristics and experiences of those who drop out, but also to study changes over time in the levels and patterns of dropping out. As these students complete their educations and enter the work force, the follow-up data continue to provide information on the occupational experiences of American young adults.

National Household Education Survey

A field test for the National Household Education Survey (NHES) dropout data collection was conducted during the fall of 1989. The purpose of this field test was to examine the feasibility of using a random digit dialing (RDD) and computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) methodology to collect data on in-school and out-of-school experiences of dropouts and to estimate the number and percentage of event and status dropouts. (Status and event dropouts were identified by the same definitions used in CPS.)

The field test addressed a number of issues related to the use of NHES methodology for collecting data about dropouts. One major issue was the adequate coverage of the targeted population. Surveys that use the telephone for sampling and data collection fail to cover persons who live in households without telephones, estimated to be about 7 percent of all persons nationwide. If a large percentage of the population is not covered and differences in characteristics between those covered and those not covered are large, the biases from using data collected only from telephone households to estimate the characteristics of the entire population may have important consequences.

During the field test, data from the CPS were used to analyze the bias associated with telephone undercoverage. The overall telephone coverage rate for 14- through 21-year-olds was about 92 percent, which is close to the 93 percent coverage for the total population. However, the coverage rate for persons classified as either status or event dropouts was much lower: approximately 70 percent for status dropouts and 75 percent for event dropouts. Moreover, the dropout rates among persons living in the telephone and non-telephone households are quite discrepant. Thus, both conditions necessary for producing significant bias in estimates derived from a survey restricted to telephone households were present.

In an effort to increase the sample size and improve the coverage for 14- through 21-year-olds, especially dropouts, a random multiplicity sample of 25 percent of all households was selected. In these households, all females 28 through 65 years old were asked to enumerate and complete a Household Respondent Interview (HRI) for each of their 14- through 21-year-old children who did not currently live in their households, as well as for those 14- through 21-year-old children living in the household. The remaining 75 percent of the selected households were asked to complete HRIs for only the 14- through 21-year-old children living in the household.

The second issue examined was the correspondence between the estimates of dropouts based on information provided by Household Respondents completing the HRI and estimates based on information provided by the 14- through 21-year-olds in Youth Interviews (YI). In general, estimates of dropouts based on information provided by Household Respondents were smaller than similar estimates based on data from the YI for status dropouts. The opposite was true for event dropouts. Also, the relative reporting reliability of the estimates for status dropouts was greater than for event dropouts.

Analyses of dropout data from the CPS show that blacks and Hispanics have higher high school dropout rates; thus, the NHES field test oversampled blacks and Hispanics in order to increase the sample size for these groups. Oversampling increased the number of Hispanics in the sample by 34 percent and the number of blacks in the sample by 47 percent.

The field test of the NHES has demonstrated that an RDD survey of high school dropouts is feasible if it is carefully planned and executed. However, the potential for bias in the estimates due to telephone undercoverage is an issue which could not be fully resolved in the field test. To acquire information needed to assess the feasibility in the future of collecting dropout data via telephone, a dual frame data collection approach is recommended. The dual frame approach would include both an RDD telephone household survey and an in-person survey with non-telephone households.

State and School District Status Dropout Rates: Decennial Census

Data from the 1990 Decennial Census provide information on educational attainment and current enrollment status for the population ages 16 through 19. The actual district boundaries have been added to the Census data files; as a result, tabulations for individual school districts will be available. These data can be used to compute a type of status rate that shows the percentage of 16- through 19-year-olds who were not enrolled in school and had not graduated from high school. These rates can be computed using either the resident population or the household population for the nation, and within each state, county, school district, and large city.

Rates computed using the resident population for the nation and within each state, county, and large city were included in the 1991 report. While the resident population is arguably the more appropriate denominator at the national and state level, difficulties arose when local jurisdictions tried to compare the substate rates to their own school district data. In fact, there are a number of school district measures that are best considered in terms of the household population. The household population in the Decennial Census school district data reflects the experiences of the population living within the school district boundaries in 1990, including all 16- to 19-year-olds who live in households in the district regardless of where they attend or attended school. A report will be prepared from these data that will include resident population and household population dropout rates for states and for school districts serving students in grades 7–12.

Efforts to expand the range of coverage (CCD) and the amount of contextual data (CPS, NELS:88, HS&B, NHES) continue at NCES. In future years the ongoing monitoring of levels and trends for the basic event, status, and cohort dropout rates and high school completion rates will be supplemented by analyses of data from these new and expanding collections as the data come on-line.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This report has presented data on high school dropout and completion rates in the United States. Three types of dropout rates have been described—event, status, and cohort—as well as several graduation/completion rates. In addition, the report has outlined the status of NCES data collection efforts related to dropouts.

Dropout Rates

Rates. Three types of dropout rates were examined in this report.

1) The *event dropout rate* represents the share of students who leave school without completing high school during a single year. In 1992, the event dropout rate was 4.4 percent for students ages 15 through 24 in grades 10–12. The *number of event dropouts* from grades 10–12 in 1992 was approximately *383,000*.

2) The *status dropout rate* represents the proportion of individuals at any given time who are not enrolled in school and have not completed high school. In October 1992, *11.0 percent* of 16- through 24-year-olds were status dropouts. This represented about *3.4 million* persons in this age group who had not completed high school and were not currently enrolled in school.

   The status dropout rate is a cumulative rate. It is much higher than the event rate because it counts as dropouts all individuals who have not completed high school (and are not currently enrolled in school), regardless of when they last attended school.

3) A third type of dropout rate—*the cohort rate*—measures what happens to a single group (or cohort) of students over a period of time. About *11.6 percent* of the eighth-grade cohort of 1988 dropped out of school between the 8th and 12th grades. The cohort dropout rates were about 18 percent for Hispanic and 15 percent for black students, and they were higher than the rates for whites (9.4 percent) and Asians (7.0 percent).

Trend. Nationally, dropout rates have been declining. The event rate declined 39 percent between the late 1970s and the early 1990s, from an average of 6.7 percent to an average of 4.1 percent. The status rate in the early 1990s was about 17 percent lower than it had been throughout the 1970s: from an average of 14.3 percent in the 1970s to an average of 11.9 percent in the early 1990s.

The event and status dropout rates declined for both blacks and whites, but not for Hispanics. A greater rate of decline in the status rates for blacks resulted in a narrowing of the racial differential over the 2 decades. Hispanic dropout rates—event and status—have shown no consistent trend, but have remained high throughout the last 20 years. The cohort dropout rate from the sophomore to senior years decreased by 43 percent between 1980–82 and 1990–92—from 10.9 percent from 1980–82 to 6.2 percent from 1990–92.

High School Completion and Graduation

High school completion rates at different age levels reflect different sets of experiences. At ages 17–18, a number of students are still enrolled in school, and as a result only about one-third have completed high school. Fewer than 10 percent of the 19- and 20-year-olds were still enrolled in high school in 1992, and about 83 percent of this age group had completed high school. The 21- and 22-year-old age group was used to summarize the high school completion rates across racial and ethnic groups, given that less than 1 percent of this group were still enrolled in high school. The high school completion rate for 21- and 22-year-olds in 1992 was 86 percent, and 94 percent of those students held a regular diploma; the remaining 6 percent of the high school completers received some type of alternative credential.

The 86 percent completion rate represents only modest improvements over the past two decades; prior to 1990 the completion rate for 21- and 22-year-olds averaged 84 percent with fluctuations between 82 and 85 percent. A sharper increase in the completion rates for blacks relative to whites narrowed the difference between the groups, but there is still a measurable gap. Data for the early 1990s show about 90 percent of the white 21- and 22-year-olds completing high school, compared to an average of 82 percent of the black 21- to 22-year-olds; and the gap for Hispanics is even greater with only about 62 percent of the Hispanic 21- to 22-year-olds completing high school.

High school completion rates were also examined in detail for 29- and 30-year-olds to capture the effects of late completers on high school completion. In general, while the gains experienced by this age group were larger than those observed for 21- and 22-year-olds, they stopped in the early 1980s. Since that time, the rates for the group as a whole and for whites and blacks have shown no trend.

By spring 1992, 88.4 percent of the 1988 cohort of eighth graders were either enrolled in school working towards high school completion or had already completed high school or passed an equivalency test. Among the dropouts from this cohort (11.6 percent), over one-half reported plans to get a GED or complete regular high school.

New Data Sources

The data presented in this report on dropout and high school completion rates provide important insights for educators and policymakers. However, there are several weaknesses in these data. For example, the sample sizes in CPS may result in imprecise estimates of dropout and completion rates for important subgroups, including subregional areas and some minority subpopulations. Furthermore, the cross-sectional nature of the data does not allow the examination of factors that lead to dropping out of school and its consequences. Therefore, NCES is working to improve the availability of reliable and policy-relevant data on dropouts.

The Common Core of Data (CCD) began implementation of a new dropout data collection, with data for the 1991–92 school year reported as one component of the 1992–93 reporting year. Full implementation of the collection of dropout data through the CCD will make it possible to report the number and rate of event dropouts from grades 7–12 for public schools by school districts, states, the nation, and major subpopulations.

Furthermore, several other surveys, including the National Household Education Survey and planned followups of the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 and the High School and Beyond study, can provide additional sources of data on dropouts and high school completers in the future. In particular, data from the two longitudinal studies will provide important data needed to monitor the percentage of dropouts who successfully complete a high school diploma or its equivalent.

Conclusion

Over the last 20 years, there has been a general decline in dropout rates and a general increase in high school completion rates. Between the late 1970s and the early 1990s, event rates declined 39 percent and status rates have declined 17 percent. Completion rates for 21- and 22-year-olds showed modest increases over the last two decades. Moreover, the dropout rates for black young people have shown the greatest progress over the last two decades, thus narrowing the gap between the proportion of white and black students dropping out of school.

However, notwithstanding these gains, dropout rates remain at unacceptable levels with too many students failing to complete a high school education. In 1992, approximately 383 thousand students ages 15 through 24 dropped out of high school. Over 3.4 *million* persons ages 16 through 24 had not completed high school and were not currently enrolled in school. Dropout and non-completion rates were particularly high for Hispanics, and for those in the central city. Furthermore, despite the fact that current family income may be an effect of dropping out rather than a cause, persons currently residing in low income families have dropout rates that are much higher than those of persons living in high income families.

The workplace continues to require increased literacy, more education, enhanced technological skills, and, perhaps most importantly, the ability to embark on careers that require lifelong learning. Encouraging young people to stay in school and dropouts to return to school or to enter alternative educational programs is essential. Without the skills and training that schooling should provide, those who do not finish face a lifetime of limited opportunities.

APPENDIX A

Standard Error and Time Series Tables

Table A1.—Standard errors for Table 1: Event dropout and retention rates and number of dropouts ages 15–24 in grades 10–12: October 1990 through October 1992

Year ending	Event dropout rate (percent)	School retention rate (percent)	Number of dropouts (in thousands)
1990	0.33	0.33	29
1991	0.34	0.34	29
1992*	0.35	0.35	30

* Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A2.—Standard errors and population sizes for Table 2: Event dropout and retention rates and number and distribution of dropouts from grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by sex, race–ethnicity, income, region, and metropolitan status: October 1992

	Event dropout and retention rate		Percent of all dropouts	
	Standard error	Population size (in thousands)	Standard error	Population size (in thousands)
Total	0.35	8,716	—	383
Sex				
Male	0.46	4,492	4.05	176
Female	0.53	4,224	4.05	207
Race–ethnicity[1]				
White, non-Hispanic	0.38	6,110	4.00	225
Black, non-Hispanic	1.09	1,365	3.61	68
Hispanic	2.24	873	4.80	71
Family income[2]				
Low income level	1.43	1,213	3.87	133
Middle income level	0.46	4,983	4.03	217
High income level	0.36	2,520	2.28	33
Region				
Northeast	0.64	1,618	2.52	59
Midwest	0.72	2,207	3.61	107
South	0.60	3,072	3.97	136
West	0.79	1,818	3.42	81
Metropolitan status				
Central city	0.67	2,586	3.82	126
Suburban	0.46	4,242	3.98	153
Nonmetropolitan	0.92	2,111	4.43	104

— Not applicable.

[1] Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

[2] Family income in current residence. Low income is defined as the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes for 1992; middle income is between 20 and 80 percent of all family incomes; and high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

Table A3.—Standard errors for Table 3: Event dropout and retention rates and number and distribution of dropouts from grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by grade level: October 1992

	Event dropout and retention rate		Percent of all dropouts	
	Standard error	Population size (in thousands)	Standard error	Population size (in thousands)
Total	0.35	8,716	—	383
Grade*				
10th grade	0.45	3,197	3.32	80
11th grade	0.54	3,213	3.77	120
12th grade	0.85	2,529	4.06	183

— Not applicable.

* Dropouts were assumed to have dropped out in the next grade higher than the highest grade they actually completed; therefore, summer dropouts are assigned to the next highest grade.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

Table A4.—Standard errors for Table 4: Event dropout and retention rates and number and distribution of dropouts from grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by age group: October 1992

	Event dropout and retention rate		Percent of all dropouts	
	Standard error	Population size (in thousands)	Standard error	Population size (in thousands)
Total	0.35	8,716	—	383
Age*				
15–16	0.51	2,434	2.99	62
17	0.52	2,926	3.50	94
18	0.66	2,405	3.63	105
19	1.72	691	2.99	62
20–24	4.16	260	2.96	60

— Not applicable.

* Age when a person dropped out may be one year younger, because the dropout event could occur at any time over a 12-month period.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

Table A5.—Supporting data for Table 5: Event dropout rates for grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by sex and race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992

Year	White, non-Hispanic		Black, non-Hispanic		Hispanic	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
	(percent)					
1972	5.0	5.6	9.8	9.3	11.6	10.9
1973	6.0	5.0	11.9	8.2	7.9	11.9
1974	6.6	4.9	10.8	12.3	12.8	7.1
1975	4.7	5.4	8.4	9.0	10.3	11.6
1976	6.3	4.9	8.5	6.3	7.6	7.1
1977	6.6	5.6	7.8	9.3	9.8	5.4
1978	6.4	5.1	11.0	9.5	15.9	8.5
1979	6.4	5.7	7.8	11.7	10.5	9.1
1980	5.7	4.8	7.7	8.7	17.6	6.7
1981	5.2	4.5	9.4	10.0	10.7	10.7
1982	4.9	4.6	8.9	6.6	9.5	8.8
1983	4.7	4.0	6.9	7.1	13.8	6.2
1984	4.8	4.1	6.0	5.5	12.3	10.2
1985	4.6	4.1	8.3	7.3	9.4	10.0
1986	3.8	3.7	5.1	5.7	12.4	11.3
1987[1]	3.9	3.1	6.2	6.7	4.8	6.1
1988[1]	4.3	4.1	6.3	5.6	12.3	8.2
1989[1]	3.7	3.3	7.0	8.6	7.8	7.7
1990[1]	3.5	3.1	4.2	5.7	8.7	7.2
1991[1]	2.8	3.7	5.3	6.8	10.1	4.6
1992[1,2]	3.5	4.0	3.3	6.7	7.6	9.0

[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

NOTE: Some figures are revised from those previously published.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

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Table A6.—Standard errors for Table 5: Event dropout rates, grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by sex and race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992

Year	White, non-Hispanic		Black, non-Hispanic		Hispanic	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
	(percent)					
1972	0.47	0.50	1.96	1.79	3.99	3.93
1973	0.51	0.47	2.13	1.70	3.46	3.95
1974	0.54	0.46	1.99	1.99	4.00	3.04
1975	0.45	0.48	1.79	1.75	3.37	3.69
1976	0.52	0.47	1.74	1.52	3.05	2.76
1977	0.54	0.50	1.62	1.76	3.21	2.65
1978	0.53	0.48	2.00	1.71	4.22	3.35
1979	0.53	0.50	1.75	1.93	3.57	3.30
1980	0.51	0.48	1.69	1.72	4.48	2.70
1981	0.49	0.47	1.86	1.77	3.26	3.19
1982	0.52	0.50	1.81	1.59	3.19	3.34
1983	0.52	0.48	1.71	1.62	3.93	2.79
1984	0.53	0.49	1.57	1.44	3.94	3.23
1985	0.53	0.50	1.83	1.74	3.72	3.50
1986	0.48	0.47	1.45	1.51	3.92	3.68
1987[1]	0.48	0.44	1.58	1.64	2.53	2.80
1988[1]	0.55	0.56	1.71	1.67	4.52	4.09
1989[1]	0.54	0.52	1.87	2.05	3.68	3.81
1990[1]	0.52	0.50	1.49	1.67	3.47	2.98
1991[1]	0.46	0.55	1.60	1.79	3.61	2.45
1992[1,2]	0.52	0.56	1.27	1.75	2.98	3.36

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[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A7.—Standard errors for Table 6: Rate and number of status dropouts, ages 16–24: October 1990 through October 1992

	October		
	1990	1991	1992*
Status dropout rate (percent)	0.29	0.30	0.28
Number of status dropouts (in thousands)	92	93	88

* Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A8.—Standard errors for Table 7: Rate, number, and distribution of status dropouts, by age: October 1992

	Status dropout rate	Number of status dropouts (in thousands)	Percent of all dropouts	Percent of population
Total	0.28	88	—	—
Age				
16	0.52	17	2.68	0.85
17	0.66	22	2.64	0.85
18	0.90	30	2.56	0.86
19	0.90	29	2.57	0.86
20	0.95	31	2.54	0.85
21	0.92	33	2.52	0.85
22	0.87	32	2.53	0.85
23	0.86	31	2.54	0.85
24	0.90	31	2.54	0.85

— Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

Table A9.—Standard errors for Table 8: Rate, number, and distribution of status dropouts, by sex, race–ethnicity, income, region, and metropolitan status: October 1992

	Status dropout rate	Number of status dropouts (in thousands)	Percent of all dropouts	Percent of population
Total	0.28	88	—	—
Sex				
Male	0.41	63	1.91	0.64
Female	0.39	61	1.95	0.64
Race–ethnicity[1]				
White, non-Hispanic	0.29	63	1.94	0.49
Black, non-Hispanic	0.95	43	2.87	0.97
Hispanic	1.86	65	3.44	1.29
Family income[2]				
Low income level	0.89	52	2.07	0.81
Middle income level	0.36	64	1.87	0.59
High income level	0.28	20	2.66	0.79
Region				
Northeast	0.50	29	2.17	0.70
Midwest	0.49	37	2.45	0.78
South	0.51	56	2.16	0.74
West	0.70	47	2.38	0.83
Metropolitan status				
Central city	0.54	54	2.13	0.75
Suburban	0.39	56	2.11	0.66
Nonmetropolitan	0.73	49	2.97	0.98

— Not applicable.

[1] Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

[2] Family income in current residence. Low income is defined as the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes for 1992; middle income is between 20 and 80 percent of all family incomes; and high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

Table A10.—Standard errors for Table 9: Status dropout rate, ages 16–24, by income and race–ethnicity: October 1992

	Total	Race–ethnicity[1]		
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
Total	0.28	0.29	0.95	1.86
Family income[2]				
Low income level	0.89	1.13	2.02	4.23
Middle income level	0.36	0.38	1.07	2.61
High income level	0.28	0.27	0.84	4.26

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[1] Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

[2] Family income in current residence. Low income is defined as the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes for 1992; middle income is between 20 and 80 percent of all family incomes; and high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

Table A11.—Standard errors for Table 10: Status dropout rate, ages 16–24, by region and race–ethnicity: October 1992

	Total	Race–ethnicity *		
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
Total	0.28	0.29	0.95	1.36
Region				
Northeast	0.50	0.49	2.04	4.17
Midwest	0.49	0.48	2.21	5.96
South	0.51	0.59	1.25	3.20
West	0.70	0.68	3.61	2.80

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* Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

Table A12.—Standard errors for Table 11: Rate and number of status dropouts, ages 16-24, by recency of migration and ethnicity: November 1989

	Status dropout rate	Number of dropouts (in thousands)	Status dropout rate Ethnicity Hispanic	 Non-Hispanic
Total[1]	0.30	100	1.34	0.29
Recency of migration				
Born outside 50 states and D.C.	2.11	53	3.16	1.32
First generation[2]	1.44	36	3.08	1.01
Second generation or more[3]	0.45	122	3.42	0.31

[1] Total includes a small proportion for whom place of birth is unknown.

[2] Individuals defined as first generation were born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia and have one or both parents born outside the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

[3] Individuals defined as second generation or more were born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia and have both parents born in the United States.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, November 1989.

Table A13.—Standard errors for Table 12: Rate, number, and distribution of status dropouts speaking a non-English language at home, ages 16–24, by ethnicity and English-speaking ability: October 1992

	Status dropout rate	Number of status dropouts (in thousands)	Percent of all dropouts	Percent of population
Total	0.28	88	—	—
Hispanics	1.86	65	3.44	1.29
Language at home[1]				
English	3.49	20	4.07	1.35
Spanish	2.21	57	3.58	1.31
English-speaking ability[2]				
Very well	2.31	35	3.96	1.33
Well	5.33	23	4.03	1.36
Not well	5.66	24	3.95	1.36
Not at all	6.14	13	4.01	1.36
Non-Hispanics	0.27	74	1.49	0.30
Language at home[3]				
English	0.29	69	1.72	0.44
A non-English language	0.89	17	2.68	0.88
English-speaking ability[4]				
Very well	0.97	13	2.70	0.89
Well	1.78	6	2.72	0.90
Not well	5.18	7	2.72	0.90
Not at all[5]	—	—	—	—

—Not applicable.

[1] These figures reflect responses on two items, "Does . . . speak a language other than English at home?" and "What is this language?" Not shown separately are a small number of Hispanics speaking a non-English language other than Spanish at home or those who did not respond to the items.

[2] These figures reflect only those Hispanics speaking Spanish in their homes and responding to the item "How well does . . . speak English?".

[3] These figures reflect responses on the item, "Does . . . speak a language other than English at home?" Not shown separately are those who did not respond to this item.

[4] These figures relect only those non-Hispanics speaking a non-English language in their homes and responding to the item "How well does. . . speak English?"

[5] Sample size too small for a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

Table A14.—Standard errors for Table 13: Educational attainment of status dropouts, ages 16–24, by recency of migration and ethnicity: November 1989

	Years of School Completed				
	< 7	7–8	9	10	11
Total[1]	0.85	0.82	0.80	0.76	0.77
Recency of migration					
Born outside 50 states and D.C.	2.63	2.89	2.96	3.06	3.07
First generation[2]	3.27	3.06	3.05	2.90	2.51
Second generation or more[3]	0.97	0.91	0.87	0.83	0.84
Ethnicity					
Non-Hispanic	0.92	0.87	0.84	0.78	0.80
Hispanic	3.56	3.67	3.72	3.76	3.71

[1] Total includes a small proportion for whom place of birth is unknown.

[2] Individuals defined as first generation were born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia and have one or both parents born outside the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

[3] Individuals defined as second generation or more were born in the 50 states or the District of Columbia and have both parents born in the United States.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, November 1989.

Table A15.—Standard errors for Table 14: Percentage distribution of status dropouts, ages 16–24, by level of schooling attained and race–ethnicity: October 1992

	Total	Race–ethnicity *		
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
Total	—	—	—	—
Level of schooling attained				
Less than 1st grade	0.40	0.55	0.99	1.16
1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th grade	0.43	0.28	0.37	1.95
5th or 6th grade	0.69	0.48	0.67	3.01
7th or 8th grade	0.81	1.22	1.93	2.24
9th grade	1.04	1.47	2.89	2.81
10th grade	1.17	1.71	3.34	2.92
11th grade	1.21	1.77	3.53	2.92
12th grade, without diploma	0.79	1.23	2.06	1.86

— Not applicable.

* Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

Table A16.—Standard errors for Table 15: Rate, number, and distribution of status dropouts, ages 16–24, by disabling condition(s) affecting learning: October 1992

	Status dropout rate	Number of status dropouts (in thousands)	Percent of all dropouts	Percent of population
Total	0.28	88	—	—
Disabling condition[1]				
No	0.29	80	1.15	0.30
Yes	1.86	22	2.63	0.89
Type of disabling condition				
Learning disability[2]	1.83	21	2.64	0.89
Mental retardation	3.39	13	2.69	0.90
Speech impairment	2.43	12	2.70	0.90
Serious emotional disturbance	3.15	13	2.69	0.90
Deafness	3.14	8	2.71	0.90
Other hearing impairment	2.90	10	2.71	0.90
Blindness	4.00	9	2.71	0.90
Other vision impairment	1.77	11	2.70	0.90
Orthopedic impairment	2.50	11	2.70	0.90

—Not applicable.

[1] Not shown separately are those who did not respond to this item, but who are included in the total.

[2] The dropout rate for the 658,000 students with learning disability reported as the sole disabling condition is 16 percent (based on 105,000 dropouts).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

Table A17.—Standard errors for Table 16: Rate, number, and distribution of status dropouts, ages 16–24, by repetition of grade(s), by highest grade repeated: October 1992

	Status dropout rate	Number of status dropouts (in thousands)	Percent of all dropouts	Percent of population
Total	0.28	88	—	—
Grade repetition[1]				
No grade repeated	0.29	74	1.51	0.39
Grade(s) repeated[2]	1.11	36	2.45	0.86
One only	1.20	29	2.56	0.87
Multiple	4.35	14	2.67	0.90
Grades repeated				
Repeated K–6	1.36	26	2.60	0.88
One only	1.37	24	2.61	0.88
Multiple	7.23	8	2.71	0.90
Repeated 7–9	2.87	23	3.06	1.04
One only	3.14	17	2.66	0.90
Multiple	6.14	10	2.67	0.90
Repeated 10–12	3.24	18	4.07	1.36
One only	3.43	11	2.70	0.90
Multiple	9.20	5	2.72	0.90

— Not applicable.

[1] Not shown separately are those who did not respond to this item, but who are included in the total.

[2] Not shown separately are those repeaters who did not identify the grade(s) repeated, but who are included in the total.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

Table A18.—Standard errors for Table 17: Status dropout rate, ages 16–24, by region and metropolitan status: Selected years, October 1975 through October 1992

	October					
	1975	1980	1985	1990[1]	1991[1]	1992[1,2]
Total	0.26	0.27	0.27	0.29	0.30	0.28
Region						
Northeast	0.52	0.51	0.54	0.57	0.54	0.50
Midwest	0.46	0.46	0.49	0.52	0.50	0.49
South	0.54	0.52	0.52	0.54	0.51	0.51
West	0.62	0.63	0.67	0.69	0.83	0.70
Metropolitan status						
Central city	0.50	0.53	0.56	0.57	0.58	0.54
Suburban	0.37	0.38	0.37	0.39	0.39	0.39
Nonmetropolitan	0.63	0.60	0.62	0.62	0.62	0.73

[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "School Enrollment—Social and Economic Characteristics of Students, October (various years)," *Current Population Reports*, Series P-20, and unpublished tabulations.

Table A19.—Standard errors for Table 18: Status dropout rates for persons ages 16–24, by cohorts: Selected years, October 1974 through October 1992

	Age groups		
Year	16–18	19–21	22–24
1974	0.41	0.50	0.50
1977	0.40	0.49	0.49
1980	0.41	0.48	0.47
1983	0.42	0.51	0.49
1986[1]	0.39	0.51	0.48
1989[1]	0.46	0.58	0.54
1992[1,2]	0.42	0.53	0.51

[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A20.—Standard errors for Table 19: NELS:88 8th- to 12th-grade cohort dropout rates, by sex and race–ethnicity: 1992

	Cohort dropout rate		
	1988–90	1990–92[1]	1988–92
Total	0.35	0.38	0.47
Sex			
Male	0.55	0.47	0.56
Female	0.51	0.53	0.66
Race–ethnicity[2]			
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.02	1.47	1.47
Hispanic	0.84	1.20	1.31
Black, non-Hispanic	1.51	1.07	1.39
White, non-Hispanic	0.44	0.40	0.49
Native American	2.32	6.22	7.13

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[1] The denominator for this rate includes the members of the 1988 eighth-grade cohort who were still enrolled in school in the spring of 1990; excluded are students who dropped out between 1988 and 1990 and students who migrated out of the country or died.

[2] Not shown separately are 434 persons (approximately 2 percent of the unweighted sample) whose race–ethnicity is unknown.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988–Base-Year, First, and Second Followup Survey, 1988, 1990 and 1992, unpublished data.

Table A21.—Standard errors for Table 20: Percentage of NELS:88 10th- to 12th-grade dropouts who reported that various reasons for dropping out of school applied to them, by sex and race–ethnicity: 1992

		Sex		Race–ethnicity		
	Total	Male	Female	Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	White, non-Hispanic
School-related:						
Did not like school	2.76	2.92	4.49	6.37	7.14	3.48
Could not get along with teachers	2.33	2.48	3.84	7.17	7.20	2.41
Could not get along with students	1.84	3.07	1.98	5.04	4.61	2.00
Did not feel safe at school	0.91	1.21	1.36	2.40	2.38	1.11
Felt I didn't belong	2.24	2.87	3.37	3.42	7.60	2.85
Could not keep up with schoolwork	2.31	2.87	3.46	5.16	5.38	2.90
Was failing school	2.49	2.91	3.94	5.56	6.99	3.00
Changed school and did not like new school	1.45	2.12	2.02	3.36	4.13	1.85
Was suspended/expelled from school	1.96	2.24	1.80	2.58	4.72	1.95
Job-related:						
Could not work and go to school at same time	2.16	2.52	3.36	3.95	4.47	2.81
Found a job	2.19	2.91	3.01	5.48	4.82	2.54
Family-related:						
Had to support family	1.34	1.65	2.14	3.35	2.98	1.61
Wanted to have family	0.91	1.38	1.29	2.50	2.17	1.15
Was pregnant*	3.20	—	3.20	7.26	8.69	4.06
Became parent	1.63	1.42	2.83	4.45	4.13	1.95
Got married	1.54	0.81	2.90	3.41	1.22	2.20
Had to care for family member	1.72	1.88	2.89	2.62	3.90	1.85
Other:						
Wanted to travel	1.56	1.53	2.66	2.62	2.26	1.50
Friends dropped out	1.20	1.62	1.76	2.91	2.02	1.70
Had a drug and/or alcohol problem	0.84	1.26	1.06	0.84	1.35	1.30

— Not applicable.

* Females only.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988—Second Followup Survey, 1992, unpublished data.

Table A22.—Percentage of NELS:88 8th- to 10th-grade dropouts who reported that various reasons for dropping out of school applied to them, by sex and race–ethnicity: 1990

	Total	Sex		Race–ethnicity		
		Male	Female	Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	White, non-Hispanic
School-related:						
Did not like school	51.2	57.8	44.2	42.3	44.9	57.5
Could not get along with teachers	35.0	51.6	17.2	26.8	30.2	39.2
Could not get along with students	20.1	18.3	21.9	18.2	31.9	17.4
Was suspended too often	16.1	19.2	12.7	14.5	26.3	13.1
Did not feel safe at school	12.1	11.5	12.8	12.8	19.7	9.5
Was expelled	13.4	17.6	8.9	12.5	24.4	8.7
Felt I didn't belong	23.2	31.5	14.4	19.3	7.5	31.3
Could not keep up with schoolwork	31.3	37.6	24.7	19.5	30.1	35.8
Was failing school	39.9	46.2	33.1	39.3	30.1	44.8
Changed school and did not like new school	13.2	10.8	15.8	10.3	21.3	9.8
Job-related:						
Could not work and go to school at same time	14.1	20.0	7.8	14.3	9.0	15.9
Had to get a job	15.3	14.7	16.0	17.5	11.8	14.3
Found a job	15.3	18.6	11.8	20.8	6.3	17.6
Family-related:						
Had to support family	9.2	4.8	14.0	13.1	8.1	9.0
Wanted to have family	6.2	4.2	8.4	8.9	6.7	5.4
Was pregnant[1]	31.0	—	31.0	20.7	40.6	32.1
Became parent	13.6	5.1	22.6	10.3	18.9	12.9
Got married	13.1	3.4	23.6	21.6	1.4	15.3
Had to care for family member	8.3	4.6	12.2	7.0	19.2	4.5
Other:						
Wanted to travel	2.1	2.5	1.7	([2])	2.9	1.9
Friends dropped out	14.1	16.8	11.3	10.0	25.4	10.9

— Not applicable.

[1] Females only.

[2] Too few cases for a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988—First Followup Survey, 1990.

Table A23.—Standard errors for Table A22: Percentage of NELS:88 8th- to 10th-grade dropouts who reported that various reasons for dropping out of school applied to them, by sex and race–ethnicity: 1990

		Sex		Race–ethnicity		
	Total	Male	Female	Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	White, non-Hispanic
School-related:						
Did not like school	3.94	5.60	5.28	5.52	11.06	4.93
Could not get along with teachers	4.00	5.79	2.96	4.80	10.28	5.36
Could not get along with students	3.22	4.28	4.86	4.35	10.08	3.38
Was suspended too often	2.64	3.14	4.51	4.27	9.60	2.26
Did not feel safe at school	2.64	3.01	4.49	4.10	9.49	2.24
Was expelled	2.49	2.95	4.35	3.82	9.55	1.50
Felt I didn't belong	3.94	6.57	2.21	3.98	2.36	5.83
Could not keep up with schoolwork	4.15	6.34	4.80	4.00	10.23	5.73
Was failing school	4.09	6.10	4.73	5.09	9.42	5.58
Changed school and did not like new school	2.77	2.99	4.72	4.52	9.73	2.18
Job-related:						
Could not work and go to school at same time	1.70	3.06	1.63	3.79	2.91	2.43
Had to get a job	1.97	2.30	3.27	4.24	4.46	2.33
Found a job	1.98	2.94	2.61	5.41	2.15	2.80
Family-related:						
Had to support family	3.13	1.13	5.97	3.85	2.75	5.14
Wanted to have family	1.39	1.40	1.97	4.33	3.24	1.03
Was pregnant[1]	6.07	—	6.07	5.82	14.56	8.96
Became parent	3.23	1.38	5.85	2.88	5.60	5.10
Got married	3.11	0.88	5.73	4.97	0.89	4.96
Had to care for family member	2.28	1.37	4.29	2.49	9.36	1.13
Other:						
Wanted to travel	0.49	0.72	0.60	(2)	1.33	0.61
Friends dropped out	2.98	4.13	4.39	3.60	10.53	2.77

— Not applicable.

[1] Females only.

[2] Too few cases for a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988—First Followup Survey, 1990.

Table A24.—Standard errors for Table 21: HS&B and NELS:88 10th- to 12th-grade cohort dropout rates, by sex and race–ethnicity: 1982 and 1992

	Cohort dropout rate	
	HS&B 1980–82	NELS:88 1990–92
Total	0.45	0.40
Sex		
Male	0.69	0.44
Female	0.57	0.64
Race–ethnicity*		
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.75	1.52
Hispanic	1.16	1.44
Black, non-Hispanic	1.29	1.13
White, non-Hispanic	0.49	0.42
Native American	4.80	6.41

* Not shown separately are those included in the total whose race–ethnicity is unknown.

SOURCES: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, High School and Beyond Study, Sophomore cohort, First Followup Survey, 1982, unpublished data. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988–First and Second Followup Surveys, 1990 and 1992, unpublished data.

Table A25.—Standard errors for Table 22: Percentage of HS&B 1980 sophomore cohort dropouts who reported that various reasons for dropping out of school applied to them, by sex and race–ethnicity: 1982

		Sex		Race–ethnicity		
	Total	Male	Female	Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	White, non-Hispanic
School-related:						
Did not like school	1.37	1.91	1.99	2.61	2.73	1.75
Could not get along with teachers	1.01	1.46	1.29	1.97	2.33	1.37
Could not get along with students	0.70	1.01	1.01	1.45	1.66	0.91
Was suspended/expelled from school	0.93	1.49	0.82	1.91	2.51	1.11
Had poor grades/was failing school	1.40	1.96	1.90	2.63	2.70	1.86
Family-related:						
Was pregnant*	1.73	—	1.73	3.46	4.58	2.07
Got married	1.25	1.02	2.20	2.30	1.51	1.69

— Not applicable.

* Females only.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, High School and Beyond study, sophomore cohort, First Followup Survey, 1982, unpublished data.

Table A26.—Standard errors for Table 23: Percentage of persons in high school by sex, race–ethnicity, and age: October 1992

	Age				
	18	19	20	21	22
Total	1.25	0.68	0.37	0.24	0.18
Sex					
Male	1.84	1.04	0.57	0.34	0.29
Female	1.62	0.88	0.48	0.33	0.21
Race–ethnicity*					
White, non-Hispanic	1.46	0.62	0.36	0.17	0.12
Black, non-Hispanic	3.78	3.01	1.14	1.13	0.97
Hispanic	5.94	4.27	2.65	2.05	1.51

* Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

Table A27.—Standard errors for Table 24: High school completion and enrollment status of 21- and 22-year-olds: October 1990 through October 1992

	Year		
	1990	1991	1992*
Completed	0.66	0.65	0.65
Enrolled in high school	0.17	0.14	0.15
Dropped out	0.64	0.63	0.63

* Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A28.—Standard errors for Table 25: Completion rates and number and distribution of completers, ages 21 and 22, by sex, race–ethnicity, income, and region: October 1992

	Completion rate		Percent of all completers
	Standard error	Population (in thousands)	Standard error
Total	0.65	7,267	—
Sex			
Male	0.93	3,590	1.01
Female	0.90	3,677	1.01
Race–ethnicity[1]			
White, non-Hispanic	0.66	5,178	0.87
Black, non-Hispanic	2.27	1,022	0.79
Hispanic	4.17	779	0.82
Family income[2]			
Low income level	1.76	1,593	0.79
Middle income level	0.84	4,091	1.00
High income level	0.77	1,583	0.86
Region			
Northeast	1.16	1,387	0.69
Midwest	1.07	1,745	0.87
South	1.18	2,541	0.97
West	1.61	1,593	0.84

— Not applicable.

[1] Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

[2] Family income in current residence. Low income is defined as the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes for 1992; middle income is between 20 and 80 percent of all family incomes; and high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

Table A29.—Standard errors for Table 26: High school completion rates and method of completion of 21- and 22-year-olds, by race–ethnicity[1]: October 1990 through October 1992

Completion method	Year		
	1990	1991	1992[2]
		(percent)	
Total			
Completed	0.66	0.65	0.65
Diploma	0.79	0.78	0.74
Alternative	0.48	0.44	0.43
White, non-Hispanic			
Completed	0.68	0.65	0.66
Diploma	1.16	0.81	0.79
Alternative	1.24	0.51	0.49
Black, non-Hispanic			
Completed	2.27	2.20	2.27
Diploma	2.60	2.67	2.55
Alternative	1.58	1.56	1.52
Hispanic			
Completed	4.15	4.20	4.17
Diploma	5.47	5.44	4.27
Alternative	2.59	2.09	2.07

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[1] Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A30.—Standard errors for Table 27: Percentage distribution of NELS:88 eighth-grade cohort, by educational status and educational plans: 1992

	Cohort rate
Total	—
Students (continuing students, early completers, GED completers, and alternative students)	0.53
Re-enrolled	0.27
Dropouts	0.47
Plan to return to high school	0.17
Plan to get GED	0.28
No plans	0.13
Unknown status due to item non-response	0.26

— Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988—Second Followup Survey, 1992, unpublished data.

Table A31.—Standard errors for Table 28: Percentage and number of status dropouts, ages 16–24, enrolled in any education program in the last 12 months: October 1992

	Percentage of status dropouts	Number of status dropouts (in thousands)
Total	—	88
Enrolled in one or more programs	0.99	33
Enrolled as a part-time student at a college or university in a degree-seeking program	0.33	11
Enrollment in one or more non-degree programs		
Continuing education	0.45	15
Courses via mail, television, radio, or newspaper	0.22	7
Private instruction/tutoring	0.19	7
Employer-, neighborhood-, or community-sponsored program	0.41	14
Basic skills instruction	0.46	16
English as a Second Language	0.37	12
Other organized educational activities	0.28	9
Enrolled as a full-time student*	0.75	17

— Not applicable.

* Full-time enrollment was not included for current year (event) dropouts, since it is likely to reflect program participation prior to dropping out. The following are included among the full-time programs: elementary or secondary school, post high school vocational or occupational training program, English as a Second Language program, adult literacy or basic skills program, associate degree program, and bachelor degree program.

NOTE: Not shown separately are those who did not respond to these items, but who are included in the total.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992, unpublished data.

Table A32.—Data for Figure 1 and Figure A: Event dropout rates for grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992

		Race–ethnicity[1]		
Year	Total	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
		(percent)		
1972	6.1	5.3	9.5	11.2
1973	6.3	5.5	9.9	10.0
1974	6.7	5.8	11.6	9.9
1975	5.8	5.0	8.7	10.9
1976	5.9	5.6	7.4	7.3
1977	6.5	6.1	8.6	7.8
1978	6.7	5.8	10.2	12.3
1979	6.7	6.0	9.9	9.8
1980	6.1	5.2	8.2	11.7
1981	5.9	4.8	9.7	10.7
1982	5.5	4.7	7.8	9.2
1983	5.2	4.4	7.0	10.1
1984	5.1	4.4	5.7	11.1
1985	5.2	4.3	7.8	9.8
1986	4.7	3.7	5.4	11.9
1987[2]	4.1	3.5	6.4	5.4
1988[2]	4.8	4.2	5.9	10.4
1989[2]	4.5	3.5	7.8	7.8
1990[2]	4.0	3.3	5.0	7.9
1991[2]	4.0	3.2	6.0	7.3
1992[2,3]	4.4	3.7	5.0	8.2

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[1] Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

[2] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[3] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A33.—Standard errors for Figure 1 and Figure A: Event dropout rates for grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992

		Race–ethnicity[1]		
Year	Total	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
		(percent)		
1972	0.33	0.34	1.32	2.80
1973	0.33	0.35	1.35	2.65
1974	0.34	0.35	1.41	2.52
1975	0.32	0.33	1.25	2.49
1976	0.32	0.35	1.15	2.05
1977	0.34	0.37	1.20	2.13
1978	0.34	0.36	1.30	2.74
1979	0.34	0.37	1.32	2.43
1980	0.33	0.35	1.20	2.56
1981	0.33	0.34	1.29	2.28
1982	0.34	0.36	1.21	2.31
1983	0.33	0.35	1.18	2.44
1984	0.33	0.36	1.06	2.51
1985	0.34	0.37	1.26	2.55
1986	0.32	0.34	1.05	2.69
1987[2]	0.28	0.31	1.16	1.74
1988[2]	0.36	0.39	1.20	3.09
1989[2]	0.36	0.37	1.39	2.65
1990[2]	0.33	0.36	1.12	2.27
1991[2]	0.34	0.36	1.20	2.18
1992[2,3]	0.35	0.38	1.09	2.24

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[1] Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

[2] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[3] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A34.—Data for Figure 2: Event dropout rates for grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by grade level: October 1972 through October 1992

Year	Total	10th grade	11th grade	12th grade
1972	6.1	5.1	6.2	6.1
1973	6.3	5.5	6.0	6.5
1974	6.7	5.6	6.1	7.5
1975	5.8	4.5	5.7	6.3
1976	5.9	3.6	5.7	7.1
1977	6.5	4.5	6.1	8.0
1978	6.7	4.7	5.9	8.6
1979	6.7	5.7	5.9	7.9
1980	6.1	4.6	5.8	7.2
1981	5.9	4.0	6.8	6.2
1982	5.5	4.2	6.0	5.8
1983	5.2	3.9	4.7	6.6
1984	5.1	4.0	4.8	6.2
1985	5.2	4.2	4.0	6.6
1986	4.7	4.4	3.4	5.4
1987[1]	4.1	3.3	3.5	5.2
1988[1]	4.8	3.6	4.9	5.5
1989[1]	4.5	3.2	4.0	5.5
1990[1]	4.0	3.0	3.1	5.3
1991[1]	4.0	3.3	3.2	4.7
1992[1,2]	4.4	2.6	3.8	7.5

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[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A35.—Standard errors for Figure 2: Event dropout rates for grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by grade level: October 1972 through October 1992

Year	Total	10th grade	11th grade	12th grade
1972	0.33	0.51	0.55	0.57
1973	0.33	0.52	0.54	0.58
1974	0.34	0.52	0.55	0.61
1975	0.32	0.47	0.52	0.58
1976	0.32	0.42	0.52	0.59
1977	0.34	0.48	0.54	0.63
1978	0.34	0.49	0.55	0.65
1979	0.34	0.54	0.54	0.63
1980	0.33	0.51	0.54	0.61
1981	0.3	0.48	0.59	0.57
1982	0.34	0.52	0.60	0.58
1983	0.33	0.52	0.54	0.60
1984	0.33	0.52	0.56	0.63
1985	0.34	0.52	0.50	0.65
1986	0.32	0.53	0.46	0.58
1987[1]	0.28	0.48	0.47	0.57
1988[1]	0.36	0.55	0.62	0.65
1989[1]	0.36	0.52	0.58	0.66
1990[1]	0.33	0.49	0.49	0.65
1991[1]	0.34	0.50	0.49	0.61
1992[1,2]	0.35	0.45	0.54	0.85

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[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A36.—Supporting data for Figure 3: Event dropout rates for grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by age group: October 1972 through October 1992

Year	Age				
	15–16	17	18	19	20–24
1972	4.6	5.0	5.8	13.2	28.4
1973	4.8	6.0	6.3	10.5	20.5
1974	5.4	5.6	6.3	15.7	28.3
1975	4.0	5.7	5.3	10.5	23.9
1976	4.0	4.8	7.2	9.5	23.6
1977	4.7	5.0	6.5	15.2	28.0
1978	3.8	6.0	6.1	17.1	30.7
1979	5.0	5.3	7.1	10.6	30.2
1980	3.8	5.3	5.9	12.7	27.1
1981	3.9	4.6	5.5	13.5	28.0
1982	3.2	3.7	5.9	10.6	25.7
1983	2.3	4.3	6.0	9.1	24.4
1984	2.8	3.2	5.9	11.4	21.8
1985	2.7	3.7	5.8	13.0	27.8
1986	3.0	3.3	4.6	9.1	26.8
1987[1]	1.8	3.3	5.0	6.6	22.5
1988[1]	2.1	3.9	5.9	12.2	14.9
1989[1]	2.3	3.1	4.8	9.3	21.5
1990[1]	2.4	2.8	4.5	7.9	14.0
1991[1]	2.5	3.5	4.7	5.8	10.3
1992[1,2]	2.5	3.2	4.4	8.9	23.2

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[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A37.—Standard errors for Figure 3: Event dropout rates for grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by age group: October 1972 through October 1992

	Age				
Year	15–16	17	18	19	20–24
1972	0.50	0.53	0.62	2.15	3.81
1973	0.51	0.57	0.64	1.90	3.67
1974	0.54	0.55	0.63	2.21	4.07
1975	0.47	0.55	0.58	1.79	3.46
1976	0.47	0.50	0.68	1.71	3.68
1977	0.51	0.52	0.63	2.12	3.58
1978	0.47	0.57	0.62	2.19	3.68
1979	0.53	0.54	0.67	1.75	3.69
1980	0.48	0.54	0.62	1.89	3.71
1981	0.49	0.52	0.59	2.02	3.52
1982	0.49	0.49	0.65	1.81	3.38
1983	0.41	0.55	0.65	1.75	3.45
1984	0.47	0.47	0.67	1.86	3.32
1985	0.45	0.52	0.68	2.05	4.22
1986	0.47	0.48	0.60	1.75	3.90
1987[1]	0.37	0.48	0.63	1.53	3.70
1988[1]	0.46	0.56	0.73	2.15	3.96
1989[1]	0.50	0.53	0.70	1.83	3.90
1990[1]	0.49	0.49	0.67	1.64	3.06
1991[1]	0.50	0.55	0.70	1.36	2.61
1992[1,2]	0.51	0.52	0.66	1.72	4.16

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[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A38.—Supporting data for Figure 4 and Figure B: Status dropout rates for persons ages 16–24, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity[1]		
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
		(percent)		
1972	14.6	12.3	21.3	34.3
1973	14.1	11.6	22.2	33.5
1974	14.3	11.8	21.2	33.0
1975	13.9	11.4	22.8	29.2
1976	14.1	11.9	20.5	31.4
1977	14.1	11.9	19.8	33.0
1978	14.2	11.9	20.2	33.3
1979	14.6	12.0	21.1	33.8
1980	14.1	11.3	19.2	35.2
1981	13.9	11.4	18.4	33.2
1982	13.9	11.4	18.4	31.7
1983	13.7	11.2	18.0	31.6
1984	13.1	11.0	15.5	29.8
1985	12.6	10.4	15.2	27.6
1986	12.2	9.7	14.1	30.1
1987[2]	12.7	10.4	14.2	28.6
1988[2]	12.9	9.6	14.3	35.8
1989[2]	12.6	9.4	13.9	33.0
1990[2]	12.1	9.0	13.2	32.4
1991[2]	12.5	8.9	13.6	35.3
1992[2,3]	11.0	7.7	13.7	29.4

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[1] Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

[2] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[3] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A39.—Standard errors for Figure 4 and Figure B: Status dropout rates for persons ages 16–24, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity[1]		
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
			(percent)	
1972	0.28	0.29	1.07	2.22
1973	0.27	0.28	1.06	2.24
1974	0.27	0.28	1.05	2.08
1975	0.26	0.27	1.06	2.02
1976	0.26	0.28	1.01	2.01
1977	0.27	0.28	1.00	2.02
1978	0.27	0.28	1.00	2.00
1979	0.27	0.28	1.01	1.98
1980	0.26	0.27	0.97	1.89
1981	0.26	0.27	0.93	1.80
1982	0.27	0.29	0.98	1.92
1983	0.28	0.29	0.97	1.93
1984	0.27	0.29	0.92	1.91
1985	0.27	0.29	0.92	1.93
1986	0.27	0.28	0.90	1.88
1987[2]	0.28	0.30	0.91	1.84
1988[2]	0.31	0.32	1.00	2.30
1989[2]	0.31	0.32	0.98	2.19
1990[2]	0.29	0.30	0.94	1.92
1991[2]	0.30	0.31	0.95	1.94
1992[2,3]	0.28	0.29	0.95	1.86

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[1] Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

[2] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[3] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A40.—Supporting data for Figure 5: Number of status dropouts, ages 16–24, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992

		Race–ethnicity[1]		
Year	Total	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
1972	4,770	3,250	858	609
1973	4,716	3,150	930	576
1974	4,849	3,205	877	653
1975	4,824	3,154	978	573
1976	4,981	3,330	904	646
1977	5,031	3,366	891	701
1978	5,114	3,361	923	728
1979	5,265	3,416	974	758
1980	5,085	3,189	889	885
1981	5,143	3,221	899	891
1982	5,055	3,184	902	823
1983	4,905	3,042	878	816
1984	4,626	2,928	754	762
1985	4,324	2,671	719	797
1986	4,142	2,405	660	966
1987[2]	4,230	2,533	644	926
1988[2]	4,232	2,277	653	1,168
1989[2]	4,038	2,151	639	1,142
1990[2]	3,797	2,007	594	1,114
1991[2]	3,881	1,953	609	1,241
1992[2,3]	3,410	1,676	621	1,022

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[1] Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

[2] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[3] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A41.—Standard errors for Figure 5: Number of status dropouts, ages 16–24, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity[1]		
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
1972	102	76	43	39
1973	91	75	45	38
1974	92	76	44	41
1975	92	75	45	40
1976	93	77	44	41
1977	95	78	45	43
1978	95	78	45	44
1979	97	79	46	44
1980	95	77	45	47
1981	96	77	45	48
1982	100	81	48	50
1983	99	79	47	50
1984	96	77	45	49
1985	93	74	44	56
1986	92	71	42	60
1987[2]	92	72	42	60
1988[2]	100	75	45	75
1989[2]	98	73	45	76
1990[2]	92	68	42	66
1991[2]	93	67	42	68
1992[2,3]	88	63	43	65

[1] Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

[2] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[3] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A42.—Data for Figure 6: Status dropout rate, ages 16–24, by race–ethnicity and sex: October 1972 through October 1992

Year			Race–ethnicity and sex					
			White, non-Hispanic		Black, non-Hispanic		Hispanic	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
				(percent)				
1972	14.1	15.1	11.7	12.8	22.3	20.5	33.7	34.9
1973	13.7	14.5	11.5	11.8	21.5	22.8	30.4	36.4
1974	14.2	14.4	12.0	11.7	20.1	22.1	33.7	32.2
1975	13.3	14.5	10.9	11.8	22.9	22.8	26.7	31.6
1976	14.1	14.2	12.1	11.7	21.2	19.9	30.3	32.3
1977	14.5	13.8	12.6	11.2	19.5	20.1	31.6	34.3
1978	14.6	13.9	12.2	11.5	22.5	18.2	33.6	33.1
1979	15.0	14.2	12.6	11.4	22.4	20.1	33.0	34.5
1980	15.1	13.1	12.2	10.5	20.8	17.8	37.2	33.2
1981	15.1	12.8	12.5	10.2	19.8	17.2	36.0	30.4
1982	14.5	13.3	12.0	10.8	21.1	15.9	30.5	32.8
1983	14.9	12.5	12.2	10.1	20.0	16.2	34.3	29.1
1984	14.0	12.3	12.0	10.1	16.9	14.3	30.6	29.0
1985	13.4	11.8	11.0	9.9	16.1	14.4	29.9	25.2
1986	13.1	11.4	10.2	9.1	14.7	13.5	32.8	27.2
1987[1]	13.3	12.2	10.8	10.0	14.9	13.3	29.1	28.1
1988[1]	13.5	12.2	10.3	8.9	15.0	13.7	36.0	35.4
1989[1]	13.6	11.7	10.3	8.5	14.9	13.0	34.4	31.6
1990[1]	12.3	11.8	9.3	8.7	11.9	14.4	34.3	30.3
1991[1]	13.0	11.9	8.9	8.9	13.5	16.7	39.2	31.1
1992[1,2]	11.3	10.7	8.0	7.4	12.5	14.8	32.1	26.6

[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A43.—Standard errors for Figure 6: Status dropout rate, ages 16–24, by race–ethnicity and sex: October 1972 through October 1992

			Race–ethnicity and sex					
			White, non-Hispanic		Black, non-Hispanic		Hispanic	
Year	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1972	0.39	0.39	0.40	0.41	1.59	1.44	3.23	3.05
1973	0.38	0.38	0.39	0.39	1.53	1.48	3.16	3.16
1974	0.39	0.38	0.40	0.39	1.51	1.46	2.98	2.89
1975	0.37	0.38	0.38	0.39	1.56	1.45	2.84	2.86
1976	0.38	0.37	0.39	0.39	1.50	1.36	2.94	2.75
1977	0.38	0.37	0.41	0.38	1.46	1.36	2.89	2.83
1978	0.38	0.37	0.40	0.38	1.53	1.30	2.88	2.78
1979	0.39	0.37	0.40	0.38	1.52	1.35	2.83	2.77
1980	0.39	0.36	0.40	0.37	1.47	1.28	2.72	2.61
1981	0.38	0.35	0.40	0.37	1.40	1.24	2.60	2.48
1982	0.40	0.38	0.42	0.40	1.50	1.26	2.73	2.71
1983	0.41	0.37	0.43	0.39	1.47	1.28	2.84	2.61
1984	0.40	0.37	0.43	0.39	1.37	1.22	2.77	2.62
1985	0.40	0.37	0.42	0.40	1.38	1.24	2.76	2.67
1986	0.40	0.37	0.42	0.39	1.33	1.22	2.66	2.63
1987[1]	0.40	0.38	0.43	0.41	1.36	1.21	2.57	2.64
1988[1]	0.45	0.42	0.47	0.43	1.49	1.35	3.19	3.31
1989[1]	0.45	0.42	0.47	0.43	1.46	1.32	3.08	3.11
1990[1]	0.42	0.41	0.44	0.42	1.30	1.34	2.71	2.70
1991[1]	0.43	0.41	0.44	0.43	1.37	1.42	2.74	2.70
1992[1,2]	0.41	0.39	0.41	0.39	1.32	1.35	2.67	2.56

[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A44.—Data for Figure 7: Status dropout rate, ages 16–24, by age group: October 1972 through October 1992

Year	Age group			
	16	17	18 and 19	20 through 24
1970	6.5	9.7	16.2	17.9
1971	5.9	9.9	15.3	17.8
1972	6.5	11.8	14.7	17.3
1973	6.9	11.5	16.0	15.6
1974	6.3	12.4	16.6	15.5
1975	5.8	11.5	16.0	15.4
1976	6.7	10.3	16.6	15.6
1977	6.4	11.0	16.6	15.4
1978	5.8	11.8	16.7	15.5
1979	6.0	11.4	16.8	16.1
1980	6.3	11.3	15.7	15.5
1981	5.7	10.0	16.0	15.5
1982	5.3	9.2	16.7	15.2
1983	4.1	9.5	14.5	15.8
1984	4.8	8.7	15.2	14.6
1985	4.7	9.3	14.3	14.0
1986	4.6	7.8	12.3	14.5
1987[1]	4.3	9.0	13.3	14.9
1988[1]	5.3	8.1	14.6	14.6
1989[1]	3.9	7.8	14.0	14.6
1990[1]	4.3	8.4	14.2	13.4
1991[1]	3.5	8.6	13.3	14.5
1992[1,2]	3.7	6.1	11.9	13.0

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[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A45.—Standard errors for Figure 7: Status dropout rate, ages 16–24, by age group: October 1972 through October 1992

	Age group			
Year	16	17	18 and 19	20 through 24
1970	0.56	0.69	0.63	0.44
1971	0.53	0.69	0.60	0.42
1972	0.54	0.71	0.58	0.41
1973	0.55	0.72	0.60	0.39
1974	0.54	0.73	0.60	0.39
1975	0.51	0.72	0.58	0.38
1976	0.55	0.67	0.59	0.38
1977	0.54	0.70	0.59	0.38
1978	0.52	0.73	0.60	0.37
1979	0.53	0.72	0.59	0.38
1980	0.56	0.71	0.58	0.37
1981	0.52	0.69	0.59	0.36
1982	0.56	0.70	0.63	0.38
1983	0.50	0.74	0.60	0.38
1984	0.54	0.71	0.63	0.37
1985	0.53	0.75	0.63	0.37
1986	0.51	0.68	0.59	0.38
1987[1]	0.50	0.71	0.61	0.39
1988[1]	0.63	0.74	0.68	0.43
1989[1]	0.55	0.76	0.67	0.44
1990[1]	0.56	0.77	0.66	0.41
1991[1]	0.50	0.78	0.66	0.42
1992[1,2]	0.52	0.66	0.64	0.40

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[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A46.—Data for Figure 8: Status dropout rate, ages 16–24, by income[1] and race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992

	Race–ethnicity		
Year	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
		Low income level	
1972	24.5	28.7	52.2
1973	25.1	31.0	48.1
1974[2]	—	—	—
1975	24.1	35.2	51.6
1976	24.0	32.1	52.1
1977	25.3	31.3	47.1
1978	25.4	30.2	52.2
1979	24.6	30.6	44.5
1980	24.1	28.0	48.4
1981	23.5	26.6	48.2
1982	26.5	26.1	46.9
1983	25.0	23.8	46.0
1984	23.9	23.3	48.0
1985	26.2	25.6	43.8
1986	23.1	23.8	45.1
1987[3]	22.9	23.9	43.1
1988[3]	23.2	25.8	53.6
1989[3]	20.4	23.7	45.8
1990[3]	20.4	22.6	48.0
1991[3]	22.0	22.8	47.9
1992[3,4]	19.0	24.0	44.7

See footnotes at end of table.

Table A46.—Data for Figure 8: Status dropout rate, ages 16–24, by income[1] and race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992—(continued)

Year	Race–ethnicity		
	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
	Middle income level		
1972	13.7	19.2	31.5
1973	13.2	19.9	30.5
1974[2]	—	—	—
1975	12.6	18.9	26.3
1976	13.5	16.4	27.7
1977	13.5	15.0	30.9
1978	13.0	16.9	29.6
1979	13.0	18.1	33.5
1980	12.2	15.4	33.9
1981	12.2	15.4	31.8
1982	12.2	15.6	30.1
1983	12.1	16.3	29.3
1984	12.0	12.4	26.3
1985	10.5	10.9	23.2
1986	10.0	9.7	25.2
1987[3]	11.3	10.4	24.5
1988[3]	10.0	9.6	31.2
1989[3]	9.9	10.0	30.9
1990[3]	9.5	10.2	29.0
1991[3]	9.1	9.7	31.6
1992[3,4]	7.9	9.6	25.2

See footnotes at end of table.

Table A46.—Data for Figure 8: Status dropout rate, ages 16–24, by income[1] and race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992—(continued)

	Race–ethnicity		
Year	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
		High income level	
1972	4.1	14.3	10.0
1973	3.3	12.9	20.3
1974[2]	—	—	—
1975	4.2	6.8	12.3
1976	4.0	5.9	9.7
1977	3.7	8.2	15.2
1978	4.6	9.9	14.3
1979	4.9	7.9	10.8
1980	4.8	8.9	15.1
1981	4.7	5.4	12.5
1982	3.7	5.0	8.3
1983	3.3	5.5	14.4
1984	3.0	4.1	8.1
1985	3.2	3.3	9.8
1986	2.8	5.8	9.8
1987[3]	3.1	5.0	7.3
1988[3]	2.7	3.1	6.3
1989[3]	2.9	4.6	7.2
1990[3]	2.2	1.5	14.1
1991[3]	2.3	2.4	11.4
1992[3,4]	1.9	0.8	9.6

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[1] Family income in current residence. Low income level is defined as the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes for the relevant year; middle income level is between 20 and 80 percent of all family incomes; and high income level is the top 20 percent of all family incomes.

[2] Data on family income not available for this year.

[3] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[4] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A47.—Standard errors for Figure 8: Status dropout rate, ages 16–24, by income[1] and race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992

Year	Race–ethnicity		
	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
Low income level			
1972	1.17	2.27	4.91
1973	1.21	2.28	5.04
1974[2]	—	—	—
1975	1.12	2.18	5.06
1976	1.08	2.05	4.48
1977	1.15	2.03	4.48
1978	1.14	2.07	4.48
1979	1.09	2.03	4.31
1980	1.08	1.91	4.07
1981	1.07	1.80	4.11
1982	1.16	1.89	4.38
1983	1.13	1.82	4.24
1984	1.10	1.80	4.04
1985	1.14	1.94	4.04
1986	1.11	1.88	3.65
1987[3]	1.12	1.92	3.72
1988[3]	1.25	2.13	4.46
1989[3]	1.18	2.12	4.32
1990[3]	1.15	2.07	4.61
1991[3]	1.21	1.96	4.61
1992[3,4]	1.13	2.02	4.23

See footnotes at end of table.

Table A47.—Standard errors for Figure 8: Status dropout rate, ages 16–24, by income[1] and race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992—(continued)

	Race–ethnicity		
Year	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
	Middle income level		
1972	0.38	1.29	2.61
1973	0.37	1.29	2.62
1974[2]	—	—	—
1975	0.36	1.26	2.39
1976	0.37	1.20	2.40
1977	0.38	1.15	2.43
1978	0.37	1.20	2.33
1979	0.37	1.22	2.42
1980	0.37	1.15	2.32
1981	0.36	1.15	2.17
1982	0.39	1.20	2.30
1983	0.39	1.24	2.34
1984	0.39	1.10	2.35
1985	0.38	1.05	2.32
1986	0.38	1.00	2.28
1987[3]	0.41	1.05	2.21
1988[3]	0.42	1.12	2.78
1989[3]	0.43	1.11	2.74
1990[3]	0.41	1.09	2.64
1991[3]	0.41	1.10	2.71
1992[3,4]	0.38	1.07	2.61

See footnotes at end of table.

Table A47.—Standard errors for Figure 8: Status dropout rate, ages 16–24, by family income[1] and race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992—(continued)

Year	Race–ethnicity White, non-Hispanic	 Black, non-Hispanic	 Hispanic
		High income level	
1972	0.33	2.94	4.77
1973	0.30	2.71	6.55
1974[2]	—	—	—
1975	0.65	2.24	3.93
1976	0.31	1.96	3.82
1977	0.30	2.44	4.80
1978	0.33	2.38	5.06
1979	0.34	2.28	4.09
1980	0.34	2.56	4.17
1981	0.34	1.86	3.81
1982	0.32	1.97	3.63
1983	0.30	1.95	4.33
1984	0.30	1.74	3.25
1985	0.31	1.58	4.00
1986	0.30	2.11	4.26
1987[3]	0.31	1.83	3.75
1988[3]	0.32	1.56	4.23
1989[3]	0.34	1.95	3.96
1990[3]	0.30	1.09	5.10
1991[3]	0.30	1.36	4.66
1992[3,4]	0.27	0.84	4.26

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[1] Family income in current residence. Low income level is defined as the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes for the relevant year; middle income level is between 20 and 80 percent of all family incomes; and high income level is the top 20 percent of all family incomes.

[2] Data on family income not available for this year.

[3] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[4] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A48.—Data for Figure 9 and Figure C: High school completion rates for persons of selected ages, by age group: October 1972 through October 1992

Year	21- and 22-year-olds	29- and 30-year-olds
1972	82.2	77.8
1973	83.0	80.2
1974	84.5	80.6
1975	83.6	80.4
1976	84.1	81.8
1977	82.9	83.1
1978	83.2	86.1
1979	83.5	85.5
1980	84.5	86.5
1981	83.8	87.1
1982	83.4	87.4
1983	83.6	87.0
1984	84.6	87.3
1985	84.8	85.8
1986	84.4	86.4
1987[1]	84.2	86.7
1988[1]	84.1	87.3
1989[1]	85.2	86.2
1990[1]	86.1	86.5
1991[1]	85.7	85.9
1992[1,2]	86.0	86.0

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[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A49.—Standard errors for Figure 9 and Figure C: High school completion rates for persons of selected ages, by age group: October 1972 through October 1992

Year	21- and 22-year-olds	29- and 30-year-olds
1972	0.66	0.79
1973	0.65	0.75
1974	0.61	0.76
1975	0.61	0.74
1976	0.60	0.68
1977	0.62	0.64
1978	0.60	0.60
1979	0.60	0.60
1980	0.58	0.57
1981	0.59	0.56
1982	0.62	0.58
1983	0.62	0.57
1984	0.61	0.55
1985	0.61	0.58
1986	0.63	0.57
1987[1]	0.66	0.55
1988[1]	0.72	0.59
1989[1]	0.71	0.60
1990[1]	0.66	0.58
1991[1]	0.65	0.59
1992[1,2]	0.65	0.59

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[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A50.—Data for Figure 10 and Figure D: High school completion rates for all 21- and 22-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992

	Race–ethnicity[1]		
Year	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
1972	85.4	74.2	55.0
1973	86.9	69.5	57.1
1974	87.7	74.5	62.1
1975	87.0	69.5	65.0
1976	86.9	75.9	56.4
1977	86.7	71.3	53.9
1978	86.7	72.3	58.1
1979	87.3	71.6	58.6
1980	88.1	76.3	57.8
1981	87.3	76.1	58.8
1982	86.6	77.6	59.6
1983	86.9	78.1	59.2
1984	87.7	79.8	64.3
1985	87.1	82.2	66.4
1986	88.0	81.3	60.9
1987[2]	87.2	79.4	66.5
1988[2]	89.4	80.6	53.2
1989[2]	89.9	81.0	59.7
1990[2]	90.5	83.3	61.1
1991[2]	90.2	81.2	61.1
1992[2,3]	90.2	81.0	62.6

[1] Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

[2] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[3] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A51.—Standard errors for Figure 10 and Figure D: High school completion rates for all 21- and 22-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992

Year	Race–ethnicity[1]		
	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
1972	0.67	2.48	4.97
1973	0.65	2.58	4.85
1974	0.62	2.43	4.74
1975	0.61	2.57	4.68
1976	0.61	2.37	4.93
1977	0.63	2.47	4.77
1978	0.61	2.39	4.49
1979	0.60	2.44	4.35
1980	0.59	2.24	4.35
1981	0.60	2.21	4.11
1982	0.64	2.19	4.40
1983	0.64	2.21	4.47
1984	0.63	2.24	4.22
1985	0.65	2.09	4.28
1986	0.66	2.19	4.07
1987[2]	0.70	2.35	4.08
1988[2]	0.72	2.48	4.84
1989[2]	0.71	2.54	4.76
1990[2]	0.66	2.28	4.14
1991[2]	0.66	2.21	4.20
1992[2,3]	0.66	2.27	4.17

[1] Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

[2] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[3] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A52.—Data for Figure 11: High school completion rates for all 29- and 30-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992

Year	Race–ethnicity[1]		
	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
1972	81.8	62.5	48.1
1973	83.3	67.5	45.1
1974	84.1	65.9	50.9
1975	84.5	62.9	53.1
1976	85.6	68.2	48.6
1977	87.0	71.5	51.0
1978	89.2	78.5	56.9
1979	89.7	75.1	51.4
1980	90.1	79.4	58.3
1981	90.8	81.5	54.8
1982	90.7	80.4	60.1
1983	90.7	81.3	57.4
1984	90.6	80.4	60.4
1985	89.4	79.5	61.6
1986	89.8	81.7	62.6
1987[2]	90.4	83.3	60.5
1988[2]	90.3	84.3	65.1
1989[2]	90.8	82.2	55.1
1990[2]	91.0	80.3	58.6
1991[2]	89.8	83.5	56.3
1992[2,3]	91.4	80.2	54.3

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[1] Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

[2] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[3] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A53.—Standard errors for Figure 11: High school completion rates for all 29- and 30-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1992

Year	Race–ethnicity[1]		
	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
1972	0.80	3.24	5.70
1973	0.76	3.35	6.20
1974	0.77	3.27	6.01
1975	0.74	3.27	5.43
1976	0.68	2.93	5.30
1977	0.64	2.67	5.01
1978	0.60	2.54	4.83
1979	0.58	2.50	4.68
1980	0.56	2.40	4.41
1981	0.54	2.23	4.24
1982	0.57	2.43	4.62
1983	0.56	2.32	4.39
1984	0.55	2.32	4.35
1985	0.58	2.29	4.26
1986	0.58	2.08	4.30
1987[2]	0.55	1.95	4.15
1988[2]	0.61	2.16	4.73
1989[2]	0.59	2.20	4.72
1990[2]	0.56	2.23	4.25
1991[2]	0.59	2.12	4.24
1992[2,3]	0.56	2.21	3.96

[1] Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

[2] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[3] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

APPENDIX B

Technical Notes

Definition of Who Is a Dropout

One of the concerns being addressed in the new data collections on dropouts is the development and implementation of a nationally consistent definition of a dropout. Currently, there is considerable variation across local, state, and federal data collections on such issues as:

- whether those below the legal school-leaving age are identified as dropouts;
- whether students entering correctional institutions are considered dropouts;
- whether those in GED programs or with an equivalency certificate are considered dropouts;
- whether those not graduating with their class (but never leaving school) are considered dropouts; and
- whether those leaving high school early to enter college are considered dropouts.

There are variations in the dropout definitions embedded in the existing data sources—Current Population Survey (CPS), High School and Beyond Study (HS&B), and National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88). In addition, the age or grade span examined and the type of dropout rate—status, event, or cohort—varies across the data sources. Furthermore, as outlined below, there have been changes in CPS procedures in 1986 and 1988. While the new collection through the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Common Core of Data (CCD) is designed to be consistent with the current CPS procedures, the CCD will include all dropouts in grades 7–12 versus 10–12 and will be based on administrative records rather than a household survey. Thus, there will be some discontinuities in dropout reporting as the new and more consistent data become available.

Definitions of Event, Status, and Cohort Dropout Rates

Table B1 displays the full array of the components of a dropout data system. A somewhat more formal presentation of these components provides a basis for exploring the mathematical interrelationships of the three types of rates.

Table B1.—Components of a dropout data system

	Grade					
Age	Less than 10	10	11	12	Completer	Dropout
Less than 15	Eed	Eed	Eed	Eed	C	D
15	Eed	Eed	Eed	Eed	C	D
16	....					
17	.					
18	.					
19	.					
20	.					
21	.					
22	.					
23	.					
24	Eed	Eed	Eed	Eed	C	D

Where E = continuing enrollment,
e = re-entrant,
d = new dropouts,
D = continuing dropouts, and
C = completers,
And where age = 5, 6, . . . , 24 and
grade = K, 1, . . . , 12, completer.

The grade-specific event dropout rates are computed by summing the new dropouts down each column—10, 11, and 12;

$$\text{Grade-specific event rate} = \frac{\sum_{i=15}^{24} d_{ij}}{\sum_{i=15}^{24} d_{ij} + \sum_{i=15}^{24} E_{ij}}$$

where j = 10, 11, or 12.

The age-specific event dropout rates are computed by summing the new dropouts across each row;

$$\text{Age-specific event rate} = \frac{\sum_{j=10}^{12} d_{ij}}{\sum_{j=10}^{12} d_{ij} + \sum_{j=10}^{12} E_{ij}}$$

where i = 15, 16, . . . , or 24.

The aggregate event dropout rate is computed as the grand sum of the new dropouts over the columns and rows;

$$\text{Event dropout rate} = \frac{\sum_{i=15}^{24} \sum_{j=10}^{12} d_{ij}}{\sum_{i=15}^{24} \sum_{j=10}^{12} d_{ij} + \sum_{i=15}^{24} \sum_{j=10}^{12} E_{ij}}$$

The age-specific status rates are computed across each row;

$$\text{Age-specific status rate} = \frac{Di. + \sum_{j=K}^{12} d_{ij} - \sum_{j=K}^{12} e_{ij}}{E_i + Ci. + Di. + \sum_{j=K}^{12} d_{ij} + \sum_{j=K}^{12} e_{ij}}$$

where i = 16, 17, . . . , or 24.

The status dropout rate is computed as a grand total aggregated across the rows and columns for each of the relevant components;

$$\text{Status dropout rate} = \frac{\sum_{i=16}^{24} D_{i.} + \sum_{i=16}^{24}\sum_{j=K}^{12} d_{ij} - \sum_{i=16}^{24}\sum_{j=K}^{12} e_{ij}}{\sum_{i=16}^{24} E_{i.} + \sum_{i=16}^{24} C_{i.} + \sum_{i=16}^{24} D_{i.} + \sum_{i=16}^{24}\sum_{j=K}^{12} d_{ij} - \sum_{i=16}^{24}\sum_{j=K}^{12} e_{ij}}.$$

Cohort rates are derived from selecting the correct components from a series of tables like the one displayed in B1, where each successive table represents a new year's data—t, t+1, t+2, ... For example, an age-specific cohort rate for 15-year-olds in year t would be based on dropout experiences of 15-year-olds in year t, 16-year-olds in year t+1, 17-year-olds in year t+2, and so forth, and assuming an annual collection, the re-entry experiences of this 15-year-old cohort at age 16 in year t+1, at age 17 in year t+2, at age 18 in year t+3, and so forth.

$$\text{Age cohort rate} = \frac{D^{t}_{15.} + \left(\sum_{j=10}^{12} d^{t}_{ij} - \sum_{j=10}^{12} e^{t+1}_{(i+1)j} \right)}{D^{t}_{15.} + E^{t}_{15j}}$$

The grade-based cohort dropout rate for 10th graders aggregates across dropouts of all ages from grade 10 in year t, dropouts of all ages from the 10th-grade cohort from grade 11 in year t+1, and dropouts of all ages from the 10th-grade cohort from grade 12 in year t+2, less re-entrants from the dropouts in each of these grades to the grade at the point the student dropped out.

Defining and Calculating Event Dropout Rates Using CPS

The October Supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS) is the only current national data source that can be used to estimate an annual national dropout rate (event) or the number of dropouts nationally regardless of when they dropped out (status). CPS is a nationally representative sample survey of all households. The survey is conducted in approximately 60,000 dwelling units in 729 primary sampling units. Dwelling units are in-sample for four successive monthly interviews, out-of-sample for the next 8 months, and then returned to the sample for the following four months. An adult member of each household serves as the informant for that household. Data for each member of the household are supplied by the informant. In addition, supplementary questions regarding school enrollment are asked about eligible household members 3 years old and over. Some interviews are conducted by telephone.

The sampling frame is a complete list of dwelling-unit addresses at the Census updated by demolitions and new construction and field listings. The population surveyed excludes members of the Armed Forces, inmates of correctional institutions, and patients in long-term medical or custodial facilities; it is referred to as the civilian, non-institutionalized population. Typically, about 4 percent of dwelling units are not interviewed, because occupants are not at home after repeated callbacks, or for some other reason.

CPS data on enrollment status in the current year and the prior year are used to identify dropouts. Data required to estimate the number and proportion of dropouts, defined either as an event or status, can be derived from CPS data. CPS also includes data that can be used to describe some basic characteristics of dropouts.

The recent redesign of the CPS introduced a change in the data used to identify high school completers. Dropout data for prior years relied solely on school enrollment and educational attainment from the October CPS Supplement. Dropout data for the current year are based on a combination of control card data on educational attainment and October Supplement data on school enrollment and educational attainment.

The new control card educational attainment item is as follows:

- What is the highest level of school . . . has completed or the highest degree . . . has received?

The October CPS Supplement items used to identify dropouts include the following:

- Is . . . attending or enrolled in regular school?
- What grade or year is . . . attending?
- Was . . . attending or enrolled in a regular school or college in October, 199-, that is of October of last year?
- What grade or year was . . . attending last year?
- What is the highest grade or year . . . has attended?
- Did . . . complete that grade?

Based on the responses of the household informant to these items, event, or current year, dropouts are defined as those 15- through 24-year-olds not currently enrolled in school who were enrolled a year ago and are not high school graduates. To calculate an event rate using CPS data, the number of current year dropouts is divided by an estimate (obtained this October) of the number of students enrolled the previous October. This estimate is the sum of those students who completed the previous grade last year and are enrolled in high school or below this October or completed high school plus those students who were enrolled last year, are not currently enrolled in school, but did not complete high school. The dropout interval is defined to include the previous summer and the current school year. That is, once a grade is completed, the student is then at risk of dropping out of the next grade.[74]

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[74] The CPS rate does not capture students who drop out and return within the 12-month period or students who enrolled after the first week of October the previous year. NELS:88 used in this report includes data on the enrollment status of each sample student in spring 1988, spring 1990, and spring 1992. The new CCD dropout collection will include students who enter a school after October and then drop out.

Status dropouts are defined as those 16- through 24-year-olds who have not completed high school and are not currently enrolled in school. To calculate a status rate using CPS data, the total number of dropouts is divided by an estimate of the number of 16- through 24-year-olds in the population.

Educational attainment status in the current year is based on the response to the control card item. The following response categories are used for high school, and the last category is the one used for high school completion:

- 9th grade,
- 10th grade,
- 11th grade,
- 12th grade, no diploma,
- high school graduate—high school diploma, or the equivalent (for example, GED).

Although the response categories are not automatically read to each respondent, they can be used as a prompt or to help clarify the meaning of the question or a response. Identification as a high school graduate is based on this direct response.

Educational attainment for earlier years was based on the October CPS Supplement questions on highest grade attended and completed. Identification as a high school graduate was derived based on attendance and completion of grade 12.

Differences in these two approaches to identifying high school graduates come from the observation that not all 12th grade completers graduate and not all graduates complete the 12th grade. These differences have an impact on the numbers and proportions of event and status dropouts.

In the case of the event rate, in prior years students who completed the 12th grade and left school without graduation or certification were counted as graduates when they were dropouts. On the other hand, students who left school because they completed high school before the 12th grade were identified as dropouts when they were graduates. This year's use of actual graduation or completion status includes the first group as dropouts and the second group as graduates.

For the computation of the event dropout rate this year compared to previous years, the 12th grade completers who do not graduate are added to the numerator count of dropouts and the early completers are subtracted from the numerator. The denominator is not changed. The net effect of this change is small, resulting in an increase in the aggregate event dropout rate that is not significant.

In the case of the status rate, there is a third group of students who were miscoded in prior years. A number of students leave school before completing the 12th grade, never complete the 12th grade, but later graduate or complete high school by some alternate means, such as an equivalency exam. In prior years these students would have been coded as dropouts. This year they are coded as graduates or completers. Furthermore, the explicit inclusion of "high school graduation or completion, including the equivalent (e.g., GED)" as a response category may have increased the likelihood of identifying late completers.

This year's computation of the status dropout rate adds the 12th graders who do not graduate to the numerator of dropouts and subtracts the early and late completers from the numerator. The denominator is not changed. These changes, especially the identification and removal of late completers from the dropout count, result in a significant decrease in the status dropout rate.

The data items used in prior years are still included in the October CPS Supplement. These data items could be used to develop estimates of each of the three groups that move under the new procedure, and then to re-compute the current year rate using the procedure from prior years. This would yield a bridge that would enable an evaluation of the impact of the data change, as opposed to substantive change. This information could then be used in the trend analysis. However, since missing data on key questions were not allocated, an exact bridge can not be constructed.

The November 1989 CPS supplement contained items pertaining to nativity and language usage of household members. An item on school enrollment is asked every month. Therefore, status dropout rates (the proportion of an age group that is out of school and has not completed high school) can be calculated every month, including November. (Event dropout rates, which represent the proportion of students who have dropped out over a 12-month period, can only be calculated in October.)

The limitations of CPS as a data source on dropouts stem from the size of the sample and the survey's broad scope. Because CPS collects no information on school characteristics and experiences, its uses in addressing dropout issues are primarily for providing some insights into who drops out and estimating national dropout rates. It is also the only source of time series data on dropout rates. Data are available since 1967 to calculate event rates and earlier for status rates.

In earlier years, CPS asked the question on enrollment the previous October about individuals 14 years old and older. As of October 1989, CPS asked this question only about individuals 15 years old and older. This report focuses on event dropout rates for secondary school students 15 through 24 years of age who dropped out of grades 10 through 12. Included in the grade 10–12 event rate are students in the 15- through 24-year-old age range who completed the 9th grade the previous year, but did not return in the fall to begin the 10th grade. The status dropout rates in this report include all persons 16 through 24 years old who have not completed high school and are not currently enrolled in school.

Beginning with 1986, to improve the quality of the data the Bureau of the Census has instituted new editing procedures for cases with missing data on school enrollment items. The effect of the editing changes for 1986, a bridge year in which the data were edited using both the old and new procedures, was to increase the number of students enrolled in school and decrease the number of students enrolled last year but not enrolled in the current year. The new editing procedures lowered the 1986 event rate for grades 10–12, ages 14 through 24, by about 0.4 percent, from 4.69 to 4.28 percent. While a difference of 0.4 percent is large relative to the observed year-to-year changes in the event rate, it is not statistically significant. The changes in the editing procedures made less difference in the status dropout rates for 16- through 24-year-olds—12.2 percent based on the old procedures and 12.1 percent based on the new.

Definition of Family Income in CPS

Family income is derived from a single question asked of the household respondent. Income includes money income from all sources including jobs, business, interest, rent, social security payments, and so forth. The income of nonrelatives living in the household is excluded, but the income of all family members 14 years old and over, including those temporarily living away, is included. Family income refers to receipts over a 12-month period.

Income for families from which no income information was obtained (about 5 percent of families) was imputed. A sequential hotdeck procedure was used. A total of 200 imputation classes were created—5 levels of the age of head of household by 5 levels of the education of the head of household by 2 levels for the employment status of the head of household, and 4 levels of the number of workers in the household. To minimize the multiple use of a single donor, up to 5 donors were placed in each imputation class. A donor was selected at random from these when a family with missing income information was encountered. In a few instances (about 10 of 50,000 families in each year) an imputation class had no donors but a family from the class with missing income information was encountered. In these cases a donor was selected by collapsing similar classes until a nonempty imputation class was created.

To facilitate comparisons over time, the categorical family income information was transformed into a continuous family income variable. The transformation was accomplished by randomly assigning for each family an income value from the income interval to which their income belonged. For intervals below the median a rectangular probability density function was used; for those above the median a Pareto probability density function was used. The methodology has a feature that if the continuous family income variable were transformed back to a categorical family income variable, the value for each family would be identical to the original data. Based on the continuous family income variable, a family income percentile variable is calculated for each person in the survey which represents that person's position in the family income distribution. For example, if 25 percent of all persons have a lower value of family income (and 75 percent have a higher value), then the person's family income percentile variable has a value of 25. The methodology gives all persons in the same household the same value of both the categorical and continuous versions of family income. There are several issues that affect the interpretation of dropout rates by family income using the CPS. First, it is possible that the family income of the students at the time they dropped out was somewhat different than their current family income. (The problem is potentially greatest with status dropouts who could have dropped out several years ago.)

Furthermore, family income is from a single question asked of the household respondent in the October CPS. In some cases, there are persons 15 through 24 years old living in the household that are unrelated to the household respondent, yet whose family income is defined as the income of the family of the household respondent. Therefore, the current household income of the respondent may not accurately reflect that person's family background. In particular, in 1991 some of the dropouts in the 15- through 24-year age range were not still living in a family unit with a parent present. However, an analysis of 1991 status dropout rates by family income, race–ethnicity, and family status (presence of parent in the household) indicates that the bias introduced by persons not living in their parent's household is small (table B2). For example, while only 62 percent of 16- through 24-year-olds lived with at least one parent, the status dropout rates for black and white persons were similar with or without the parent present. For example, 20.6 percent of low income blacks without a parent present were dropouts compared with 21.3 percent of those living in their parent's household. In addition, the relationship between dropout rates and income held within each racial category regardless of whether the person was living in a household with his or her parent. That is, blacks and whites within income levels dropped out at similar levels—with or without the parent present. However, this was not true of Hispanics. Hispanics in upper income levels not residing with either parent were more likely than upper income Hispanics with parents present to be status dropouts.

Table B2—Percentage of status dropouts by household type by race–ethnicity and income: October 1992

	Total	Parent not present	Parent present
Total	100.0	38.0	62.0
White, non-Hispanic	100.0	37.1	62.9
Low income	19.9	20.5	18.1
Middle income	7.9	10.0	6.6
High income	2.1	7.7	1.6
Black, non-Hispanic	100.0	33.9	66.1
Low income	21.0	20.6	21.3
Middle income	7.6	9.1	7.1
High income	3.0	4.1	2.7
Hispanic	100.0	48.7	51.3
Low income	45.8	59.6	26.2
Middle income	28.4	46.0	15.4
High income	12.8	28.4	8.3

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1991, unpublished data.

Defining and Calculating Cohort Dropout Rates Using NELS:88

The NELS:88 baseline comprised a national probability sample of all regular public and private 8th-grade schools in the 50 states and District of Columbia in the 1987–88 school year. Excluded from the NELS:88 sample were Bureau of Indian Affairs schools, special education schools for the handicapped, area vocational schools that do not enroll students directly, and schools for dependents of U.S. personnel overseas; such school-level exclusions have a quite small impact on national estimates.

NELS:88 started with the base-year data collection in which students, parents, teachers, and school administrators were selected to participate in the survey. NELS:88 began with a target sample of 1,032 sample schools, of which 30 were deemed ineligible. Some 698 of the 1,002 eligible schools agreed to participate in the study. Given the longitudinal nature of the study, the initial school response rate of 69.7 percent was deemed too low to yield acceptable levels of schools, administrators, teachers, parents, and most importantly, students. To address this concern, a sample of sister schools was selected and 359 replacement schools were identified and added to the study. Responses were obtained from 1,057 schools, thus increasing the school response rate to 77.7 percent (1,057/(1,002+359)). Usable student data were received for 1,052 of the schools.

The total eighth-grade enrollment for the 1,052 NELS:88 sample schools was 202,996. During the listing procedures (before 24–26 students were selected per school), 5.35 percent of the students were excluded because they were identified by school staff as being incapable of completing the NELS:88 instruments owing to limitations in their language proficiency or to mental or physical disabilities. Ultimately, 93 percent or 24,599 of the sample students participated in the base-year survey in the spring of 1988.

The NELS:88 first follow-up survey was conducted in the spring of 1990. Students, dropouts, teachers, and school administrators participated in the followup, with a successful data collection effort for approximately 93 percent of the base-year student respondents. In addition, because the characteristics and education outcomes of the students excluded from the base year may differ from those of students who participated in the base-year data collection, a special study was initiated to identify the enrollment status of a representative sample of the base-year ineligible students. Data from this sample were then combined with first and second follow-up data for the computation of 8th- to 10th-grade, 10th- to 12th-grade, and 8th- to 12th-grade cohort dropout rates.

The second follow-up survey was conducted in the spring of 1992. Students, dropouts, parents, teachers, and school administrators participated in this followup. Approximately 91 percent of the sample of students participated in the second follow-up survey, with 88 percent of the dropouts responding.

Missing from the resulting cohort rates is anyone who had dropped out prior to the spring of their eighth-grade year. Thus, the overall cohort rates reported here may be lower than they would have been if a younger cohort were used. This may be particularly important for Hispanics, given that CPS data show that Hispanic dropouts tend to have completed less schooling than other dropouts. The cohort rates also reflect the school enrollment status of both eligible and ineligible nonparticipants and participants, to the extent that this information could be obtained.

The following definition of a dropout was employed in NELS:88:

1. an individual who, according to the school (if the sample member could not be located), or according to the school and home, is not attending school (i.e., has not been in school for 4 consecutive weeks or more and is not absent due to accident or illness); or

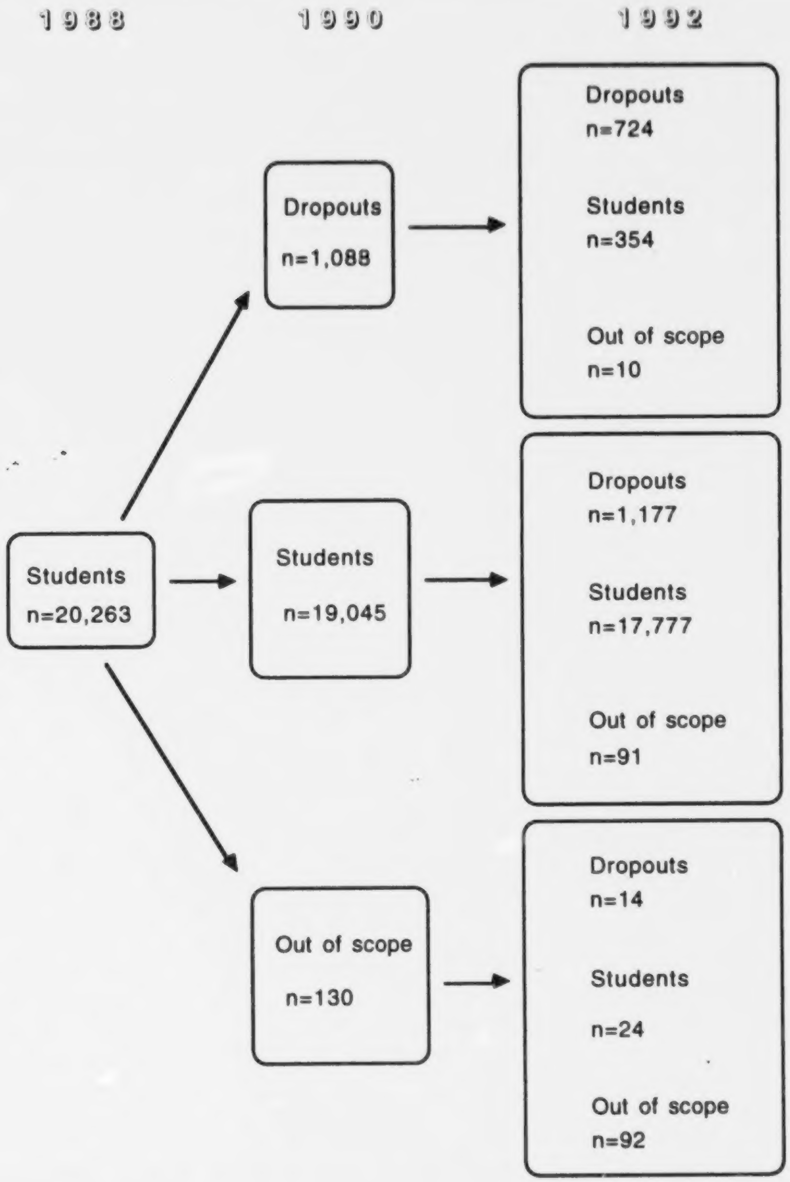
2. a student who has been in school less than 2 weeks after a period in which he or she was classified as a dropout.

Thus, a student who was a temporary dropout (stopout) who was found by the study to be out of school for 4 consecutive school weeks or more and had returned to school (that is, had been back in school for a period of at least 2 weeks at the time of survey administration in the spring of 1990) would not be classified as a dropout for purposes of the cohort dropout rates reported here.

The basic NELS:88 procedure for identification of a dropout was to confirm school-reported dropout status with the student's household. For the first followup, dropout status was obtained first from the school and then confirmed with the household for 96.4 percent of the dropouts. Thus only 3.6 percent of the dropouts were identified by only school-reported information. For the second followup, 4.9 percent of the dropouts were identified by only school-reported information.

The 1988–1990 dropout rate requires data from both 1988 and 1990. As a result, the size of the sample used in computing the 1988 to 1990 rate is tied to the size of the sample in 1990. Many students changed schools between 1988 and 1990. Because of the costs associated with following small numbers of students to many schools, a subsampling operation was conducted at the time of the first follow-up (figure B1). Of the 24,599 students who participated in 1988, 20,263 students were sampled, and 130 were found to be out of scope (due to death or migration out of the country). The dropout rates from 1988–1990 reflect the experiences of 20,133 sample cases. Some 1,088 sample cases dropped out and 19,045 sample cases continued in school.

Figure B1—The status of NELS:88 8th grade expanded spring-defined cohort sample as of Base-Year, and First and Second Followups: 1988, 1990, and 1992


1988
1990
1992
Students
n=20,263
Dropouts
n=1,088
Students
n=19,045
Out of scope
n=130
Dropouts
n=724
Students
n=354
Out of scope
n=10
Dropouts
n=1,177
Students
n=17,777
Out of scope
n=91
Dropouts
n=14
Students
n=24
Out of scope
n=92

Notes:

1. The tree includes all base-year eligible and ineligible students that were retained after first follow-up sampling that were students in the first follow-up but not in the tenth grade.
2. "Out of scope" includes deceased and out of country.
3. "Students" includes alternative completers and early graduates.
4. As a part of the second follow-up weighting process, status was imputed for all instances where first or second follow-up status was not known. These imputed values are used in the tree.

The 1990–1992 rate starts from the 19,045 student sample cases. Some 91 of the student sample cases from 1990 were identified as out of scope in 1992. The dropout rates from 1990 to 1992 reflect the experiences of 18,954 student sample cases.

The 1988–1992 rates reflect the experiences of the 20,070 student sample cases. These cases result from the 20,263 subsampled student cases in 1990, less the 92 cases that were out of scope in both 1990 and 1992, less the 91 student sample cases identified as out of scope in 1992, less the 10 dropout sample cases identified as out of scope in 1992. Note that 24 student sample cases who were out of the country in 1990 returned to school in the U.S. by spring 1992, and an additional 14 student sample cases who were out of the country in spring 1990 returned to the U.S. by spring 1992 but did not reenroll (dropouts). And, another 354 student sample cases who dropped out between 1988 and 1990 returned to school by spring 1992.

HS&B Calculation of Cohort Dropout Rates

In HS&B, students are reported as having either a regular diploma or some alternative credential—described as the equivalent of a high school diploma. The estimate that seven percent of the high school completers from the class of 1982 held alternative credentials by 1986 refers to a comparison of alternative completers with all regular diploma recipients. The estimates of a 16.6 percent dropout rate and an 8.2 percent alternative completion rate by 1986 are based on a comparison of on-time regular diploma recipients versus all other completers. Similarly, the estimate of a 17.3 percent dropout rate with 46 percent completing by 1986 is also based on a comparison of on-time regular diploma recipients versus all other completers. The difference in the last two estimates is due to the fact that they are computed from two differently derived variables on the public use data files.

Accuracy of Estimates

The estimates in this report are derived from samples and are subject to two broad classes of error—sampling and nonsampling error. Sampling errors occur because the data are collected from a sample of a population rather than from the entire population. Estimates based on a sample will differ somewhat from the values that would have been obtained from a universe survey using the same instruments, instructions, and procedures. Nonsampling errors come from a variety of sources and affect all types of surveys, universe as well as sample surveys. Examples of sources of nonsampling error include design, reporting, and processing errors, and errors due to nonresponse. The effects of nonsampling errors are more difficult to evaluate than those that result from sampling variability. As much as possible, procedures are built into surveys in order to minimize nonsampling errors.

The standard error is a measure of the variability due to sampling when estimating a parameter. It indicates how much variance there is in the population of possible estimates of a parameter for a given sample size. Standard errors can be used as a measure of the precision expected from a particular sample. The probability that a complete census would differ from the sample by less than the standard error is about 68 out of 100. The chances that the difference would be less than 1.65 times the standard error are about 90 out of 100; that the difference would be less than 1.96 the standard error, about 95 out of 100.

Standard errors for rates and number of persons based on CPS data were calculated using the following formulas:

Dropout rate:

$$s.e. = \sqrt{(b/N)(p)(100-p)},$$

where p = the percentage ($0 < p < 100$),
N = the population on which the percentage is based, and
b = the parameter associated with the characteristic;
b is equal to 2,532 for the total or white population; 3,425 for the black population; and 5,772 for the Hispanic population ages 14 through 34 years old.

Number of persons:

$$s.e. = \sqrt{(bx)(1 - x/T)},$$

where x = the number of persons (i.e., dropouts),
T = population in the category (i.e., blacks 16 through 24), and
b = as above.

Standard errors for the estimates in the tables appear in appendix A.

In October of 1991, the Bureau of the Census released new b parameters for 1988 and 1990. (Recently new parameters have also been released for the 1991 data.) With the release of the new parameters, the Bureau of the Census also made adjustments to the parameters for earlier years. Therefore, for some years, the standard errors presented in the appendix tables here are different than the standard errors presented in earlier reports.

Methodology and Statistical Procedures

The comparisons in the text have all been tested for statistical significance to ensure that the differences are larger than those that might be expected due to sampling variation. Two types of comparisons have been made in the text.

Differences in two estimated percentages. The Student's t statistic can be used to test the likelihood that the differences between two percentages are larger than would be expected by sampling error.

$$t = \frac{P_1 - P_2}{\sqrt{se_1^2 + se_2^2}}$$

where P_1 and P_2 are the estimates to be compared and se_1 and se_2 are their corresponding standard errors.

As the number of comparisons on the same set of data increases, the likelihood that the t value for at least one of the comparisons will exceed 1.96 simply due to sampling error increases. For a single comparison, there is a 5 percent chance that the t value will exceed 1.96 due to sampling error. For five tests, the risk of getting at least one t value that high increases to 23 percent and for 20 comparisons, 64 percent.

One way to compensate for this danger when making multiple comparisons is to adjust the alpha level to take into account the number of comparisons being made. For example, rather than establishing an alpha level of 0.05 for a single comparison, the alpha level is set to ensure that the likelihood is less than 0.05 that the *t* value for any of the comparisons exceeds the critical value by chance alone when there are truly no differences for any of the comparisons. This Bonferroni adjustment is calculated by taking the desired alpha level and dividing by the number of possible comparisons, based on the variable(s) being compared. The *t* value corresponding to the revised, lower alpha level must be exceeded in order for any of the comparisons to be considered significant. For example, to test for differences in dropout rates between whites, blacks, and Hispanics, the following steps would be involved:

- Establish the number of comparisons—in this case three (whites and blacks; whites and Hispanics; and blacks and Hispanics). The number of two-way comparisons that can be made equals [(n)(n-1)]/2, where n is the number of variable categories. Thus, with three categories the number of possible comparisons is [(3)(2)]/2 = 3.

- Divide the desired alpha level, 0.05, by the number of comparisons (e.g. three) to obtain the new alpha level (0.05/3 = 0.0166).

- Consult a table of *t* statistics (or the standard normal table for *z* values if the N is large) to find the *t* value that corresponds to that alpha ($t = 2.39$ for alpha = 0.0166).

All comparisons in this report were tested using the Bonferroni adjustment for the *t* tests. Where categories of two variables were involved, the number of comparisons used to make the Bonferroni adjustment was based on the relationship(s) being tested.

Trends. Regression analysis was used to test for trends across age groups and over time. Regression analysis assesses the degree to which one variable (the dependent variable) is related to a set of other variables (the independent variables). The estimation procedure most commonly used in regression analysis is ordinary least squares (OLS). While some of the trends span the entire period from 1972 to 1992, many of the rates reached a high point during the late 1970s. Thus, most of the descriptions that refer to "since the late 1970s" use 1978 as a starting point.

The analyses in this report were conducted on the event rates, status rates, and completion rates. The event rate and status rate estimates were used as dependent measures in the analysis with a variable representing time and a dummy variable controlling for changes in the editing procedure (0 = years 1968 to 1986, 1 = 1987 to 1991) used as independent variables. However, in these data some of the observations were less reliable than others (i.e., some years' standard errors were larger than other years'). In such cases OLS estimation procedures do not apply and it is necessary to modify the regression procedures to obtain unbiased regression parameters. The modification that is usually recommended transforms the observations to variables which satisfy the usual assumptions of ordinary least squares regression and then applies the usual OLS analysis to these variables.

This was done in this analysis using the data manipulation and regression capability of LOTUS 1-2-3. Each of the variables in the analysis was transformed by dividing each by the standard error of the relevant year's rate (event or status). The new dependent variable was then regressed on the new time variable and new editing-change dummy variable. All statements about trends in this report are statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

APPENDIX C

Alternative Definitions of High School Completion Rates, by Age Groups and Race–ethnicity: 1972–1992

Table C1.—High school completion rates for 17- and 18-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992

		Race–ethnicity			
Year	Total	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
		(As percent of age group)			
1972	40.3	43.3	29.2	23.1	44.1
1973	39.8	42.4	29.3	27.4	38.7
1974	39.9	42.5	31.1	24.2	42.6
1975	39.9	43.5	26.5	24.3	35.2
1976	37.6	40.2	26.4	28.0	41.9
1977	39.4	42.3	27.7	28.4	38.2
1978	39.5	42.2	29.1	25.9	46.5
1979	39.2	41.8	28.3	29.7	40.0
1980	38.0	40.7	30.1	26.0	31.1
1981	38.8	41.7	30.6	26.1	34.8
1982	38.2	41.4	28.3	24.8	38.9
1983	38.3	41.6	30.0	23.6	33.5
1984	38.4	40.4	34.7	28.5	33.0
1985	38.4	41.7	31.2	20.4	46.6
1986	38.0	40.8	32.9	25.2	36.8
1987[1]	36.6	39.1	31.4	26.3	34.4
1988[1]	37.2	39.1	33.9	28.7	33.1
1989[1]	36.1	38.8	28.8	27.6	35.4
1990[1]	35.8	39.5	31.6	19.1	36.2
1991[1]	34.1	38.0	27.9	20.4	30.2
1992[1,2]	34.5	37.1	28.9	25.2	37.1

See footnotes at end of table.

Table C1.—High school completion rates for 17- and 18-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992—(continued)

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
	(As percent of those in age group not currently enrolled in high school or below)				
1972	76.1	79.4	63.4	51.4	68.3
1973	74.7	77.9	61.7	51.4	89.9
1974	73.8	76.6	64.5	48.8	84.3
1975	74.6	77.7	59.2	53.6	100.0
1976	72.9	75.7	61.4	54.9	87.2
1977	74.6	77.3	65.0	54.1	77.4
1978	74.0	76.6	65.5	50.0	87.2
1979	73.7	76.6	64.1	55.2	73.8
1980	74.2	77.7	67.0	49.1	70.1
1981	75.5	78.9	70.4	48.1	79.5
1982	75.5	79.3	66.2	49.9	82.7
1983	76.2	79.4	70.0	53.3	66.6
1984	77.1	78.8	77.1	57.4	84.0
1985	76.2	79.8	71.8	47.0	79.7
1986	79.4	82.8	79.1	52.1	86.0
1987[1]	74.5	77.9	68.1	53.9	75.7
1988[1]	75.9	78.8	75.5	52.2	89.7
1989[1]	75.5	78.9	69.4	54.6	90.3
1990[1]	75.2	80.1	71.8	41.4	90.2
1991[1]	74.3	80.2	68.7	41.9	93.9
1992[1,2]	77.8	83.0	70.8	52.0	84.9

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[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years).

Table C2.—Standard errors for Table C1: High school completion rates for 17- and 18-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
		(As percent of age group)			
1972	0.79	0.89	2.33	3.40	9.06
1973	0.78	0.88	2.31	3.69	9.44
1974	0.77	0.87	2.34	3.19	7.50
1975	0.77	0.88	2.23	3.15	6.95
1976	0.76	0.87	2.22	3.20	7.04
1977	0.77	0.88	2.25	3.33	6.95
1978	0.78	0.88	2.32	3.25	6.76
1979	0.78	0.89	2.27	3.34	6.53
1980	0.77	0.89	2.26	3.06	6.28
1981	0.78	0.90	2.25	2.97	5.72
1982	0.83	0.97	2.30	3.07	5.91
1983	0.85	0.99	2.39	3.14	6.02
1984	0.86	1.01	2.53	3.37	5.97
1985	0.87	1.03	2.56	2.80	5.94
1986	0.87	1.03	2.54	2.92	5.70
1987[1]	0.85	1.01	2.47	3.06	4.94
1988[1]	0.92	1.10	2.71	3.27	5.37
1989[1]	0.95	1.13	2.69	3.27	5.81
1990[1]	0.93	1.14	2.60	2.67	5.72
1991[1]	0.94	1.16	2.62	2.74	5.23
1992[1,2]	0.93	1.14	2.54	3.01	5.25

See footnotes at end of table.

Table C2.—Standard errors for Table C1: High school completion rates for 17- and 18-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992—(continued)

		Race–ethnicity			
Year	Total	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
(As percent of those in age group not currently enrolled in high school or below)					
1972	0.94	0.99	3.63	6.04	10.56
1973	0.96	1.01	3.58	5.66	8.89
1974	0.94	1.00	3.47	5.28	7.77
1975	0.94	0.99	3.72	5.44	0.00
1976	0.97	1.05	3.74	4.97	6.88
1977	0.95	1.01	3.67	5.07	8.52
1978	0.95	1.02	3.65	5.15	6.20
1979	0.96	1.03	3.64	4.95	7.95
1980	0.97	1.05	3.30	4.78	9.33
1981	0.96	1.03	3.40	4.59	7.33
1982	1.03	1.10	3.79	5.05	6.69
1983	1.05	1.13	3.66	5.56	8.49
1984	1.05	1.17	3.32	5.24	7.43
1985	1.08	1.17	3.77	5.26	6.26
1986	1.05	1.13	3.41	4.82	6.26
1987[1]	1.11	1.22	3.75	5.26	6.67
1988[1]	1.18	1.32	3.77	4.95	5.74
1989[1]	1.24	1.37	4.31	5.24	5.98
1990[1]	1.23	1.35	3.82	5.09	5.62
1991[1]	1.30	1.40	4.29	4.90	4.92
1992[1,2]	1.24	1.35	4.08	5.20	6.01

[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years).

Table C3.—High school completion rates for 19- and 20-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity			
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
		(As percent of age group)			
1972	80.7	84.7	66.3	55.4	70.7
1973	82.2	85.9	68.2	54.7	73.6
1974	80.6	84.6	65.7	58.8	64.7
1975	81.0	84.7	66.2	62.6	81.0
1976	81.1	85.1	67.6	57.3	83.1
1977	81.4	85.0	69.2	60.0	84.6
1978	80.9	85.2	67.1	56.1	76.0
1979	80.4	83.9	68.6	59.8	81.7
1980	81.1	85.5	71.1	51.3	80.2
1981	80.8	84.8	71.8	56.8	76.8
1982	80.6	84.7	69.4	58.8	76.0
1983	81.2	85.3	73.2	57.9	73.8
1984	82.0	85.3	75.4	63.0	71.4
1985	83.1	86.9	73.8	64.8	79.9
1986	83.8	87.8	74.9	65.8	83.4
1987[1]	82.9	86.4	79.4	63.7	79.2
1988[1]	82.1	87.1	73.6	53.6	93.1
1989[1]	81.8	86.8	74.8	59.4	71.9
1990[1]	82.8	87.3	77.6	59.7	82.1
1991[1]	81.4	87.0	72.5	55.4	92.6
1992[1,2]	83.3	88.8	75.6	59.2	87.7

See footnotes at end of table.

Table C3.—High school completion rates for 19- and 20-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992—(continued)

		Race–ethnicity			
Year	Total	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
(As percent of those in age group not currently enrolled in high school or below)					
1972	83.0	86.3	70.3	58.8	82.5
1973	84.1	87.4	72.1	57.1	75.1
1974	82.6	85.7	71.1	62.8	68.0
1975	83.0	86.0	71.2	65.5	83.1
1976	83.4	86.4	73.0	62.2	89.1
1977	83.5	86.1	75.5	63.1	88.2
1978	83.0	86.6	71.8	58.6	79.2
1979	82.3	85.4	71.3	62.0	87.3
1980	82.9	86.8	74.8	53.5	83.9
1981	83.2	86.5	76.7	60.0	84.0
1982	82.8	86.1	74.0	62.0	81.6
1983	83.8	87.2	77.4	62.3	80.9
1984	84.4	86.8	80.4	67.3	78.4
1985	85.7	88.6	79.4	68.4	88.3
1986	86.4	89.4	80.2	69.7	89.3
1987[1]	85.5	88.1	83.6	67.6	87.5
1988[1]	84.4	88.7	78.1	56.7	95.1
1989[1]	84.2	88.1	79.8	62.8	81.3
1990[1]	85.7	89.3	82.8	63.2	88.7
1991[1]	84.9	89.0	80.3	60.7	94.6
1992[1,2]	86.5	90.7	81.1	65.0	90.9

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[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years).

Table C4.—Standard errors for Table C3: High school completion rates for 19- and 20-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
		(As percent of age group)			
1972	0.67	0.67	2.67	4.21	8.92
1973	0.63	0.64	2.62	4.41	7.65
1974	0.65	0.66	2.64	3.89	8.25
1975	0.64	0.66	2.47	3.89	5.78
1976	0.62	0.63	2.38	3.70	5.73
1977	0.63	0.65	2.42	3.72	5.36
1978	0.63	0.64	2.42	3.79	6.00
1979	0.64	0.66	2.42	3.71	5.40
1980	0.62	0.63	2.39	3.39	5.30
1981	0.63	0.66	2.32	3.33	5.29
1982	0.67	0.69	2.48	3.61	5.05
1983	0.67	0.70	2.38	3.53	5.27
1984	0.67	0.71	2.29	3.71	5.60
1985	0.66	0.68	2.37	3.50	5.50
1986	0.66	0.69	2.37	3.31	4.42
1987[1]	0.68	0.72	2.27	3.16	4.73
1988[1]	0.76	0.78	2.78	3.62	3.29
1989[1]	0.75	0.78	2.56	3.47	5.90
1990[1]	0.70	0.73	2.38	3.27	4.56
1991[1]	0.74	0.77	2.54	3.24	2.97
1992[1,2]	0.73	0.74	2.63	3.20	3.70

See footnotes at end of table.

Table C4.—Standard errors for Table C3: High school completion rates for 19- and 20-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992—(continued)

(As percent of those in age group not currently enrolled in high school or below)

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity			
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
1972	0.64	0.65	2.66	4.30	8.05
1973	0.61	0.61	2.60	4.48	7.58
1974	0.63	0.64	2.62	3.95	8.26
1975	0.62	0.64	2.45	3.91	5.59
1976	0.60	0.61	2.35	3.78	4.94
1977	0.61	0.63	2.36	3.76	4.90
1978	0.61	0.62	2.40	3.84	5.82
1979	0.62	0.64	2.40	3.74	4.80
1980	0.60	0.61	2.35	3.46	5.00
1981	0.61	0.63	2.26	3.39	4.81
1982	0.65	0.67	2.44	3.65	4.75
1983	0.64	0.67	2.31	3.60	4.93
1984	0.64	0.68	2.18	3.73	5.34
1985	0.63	0.65	2.26	3.51	4.64
1986	0.63	0.65	2.25	3.30	3.80
1987[1]	0.64	0.69	2.14	3.18	4.05
1988[1]	0.73	0.74	2.69	3.70	2.82
1989[1]	0.72	0.75	2.45	3.53	5.44
1990[1]	0.67	0.69	2.24	3.32	3.92
1991[1]	0.70	0.72	2.39	3.34	2.61
1992[1,2]	0.69	0.69	2.49	3.28	3.31

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[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years).

Table C5.—High school completion rates for 21- and 22-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
		(As percent of age group)			
1972	82.2	85.4	74.2	55.0	78.4
1973	83.0	86.9	69.5	57.1	90.9
1974	84.5	87.7	74.5	62.1	83.7
1975	83.6	87.0	69.5	65.0	73.1
1976	84.1	86.9	75.9	56.4	86.5
1977	82.9	86.7	71.3	53.9	86.6
1978	83.2	86.7	72.3	58.1	85.9
1979	83.5	87.3	71.6	58.6	79.2
1980	84.5	88.1	76.3	57.8	80.8
1981	83.8	87.3	76.1	58.8	78.4
1982	83.4	86.6	77.6	59.6	81.4
1983	83.6	86.9	78.1	59.2	76.7
1984	84.6	87.7	79.8	64.3	74.6
1985	84.8	87.1	82.2	66.4	86.0
1986	84.4	88.0	81.3	60.9	90.6
1987[1]	84.2	87.2	79.4	66.5	92.0
1988[1]	84.1	89.4	80.6	53.2	88.2
1989[1]	85.2	89.9	81.0	59.7	87.1
1990[1]	86.1	90.5	83.3	61.1	90.1
1991[1]	85.7	90.2	81.2	61.1	88.5
1992[1,2]	86.0	90.2	81.0	62.6	90.0

See footnotes at end of table.

Table C5.—High school completion rates for 21- and 22-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992—(continued)

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity			
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
	(As percent of those in age group not currently enrolled in high school or below)				
1972	82.7	85.8	75.0	55.0	78.4
1973	83.5	87.4	70.1	57.7	90.9
1974	84.9	87.9	75.3	62.6	84.8
1975	84.3	87.6	70.7	65.8	73.1
1976	84.5	87.3	76.8	57.4	87.6
1977	83.6	87.3	72.2	54.7	87.3
1978	83.9	87.3	73.1	59.3	88.6
1979	84.0	87.6	72.8	60.0	79.7
1980	85.1	88.5	77.3	59.4	81.3
1981	84.2	87.8	76.7	59.2	80.1
1982	84.0	86.9	79.2	60.0	81.4
1983	84.3	87.5	78.3	60.5	78.9
1984	85.2	87.9	80.8	65.3	77.9
1985	85.4	87.7	83.1	66.8	86.1
1986	84.9	88.4	82.1	61.1	91.8
1987[1]	84.6	87.5	79.8	67.2	91.9
1988[1]	84.4	89.6	81.0	53.9	88.2
1989[1]	85.8	90.3	81.8	61.0	87.8
1990[1]	86.7	90.8	83.9	62.3	90.1
1991[1]	86.2	90.5	82.4	61.5	89.5
1992[1,2]	86.4	90.4	82.3	64.0	90.0

[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years).

Table C6.—Standard errors for C5: High school completion rates for 21- and 22-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992

		Race–ethnicity			
Year	Total	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
		(As percent of age group)			
1972	0.66	0.67	2.48	4.18	8.94
1973	0.65	0.65	2.58	4.09	4.75
1974	0.61	0.62	2.43	3.99	5.41
1975	0.61	0.61	2.57	3.94	7.26
1976	0.60	0.61	2.37	4.15	4.92
1977	0.62	0.63	2.47	4.04	4.55
1978	0.60	0.61	2.39	3.79	4.81
1979	0.60	0.60	2.44	3.68	5.45
1980	0.58	0.59	2.24	3.67	4.97
1981	0.59	0.60	2.21	3.47	5.05
1982	0.62	0.64	2.19	3.68	4.69
1983	0.62	0.64	2.21	3.74	4.98
1984	0.61	0.63	2.24	3.54	4.94
1985	0.61	0.65	2.09	3.26	4.18
1986	0.63	0.66	2.19	3.10	3.57
1987[1]	0.66	0.70	2.35	3.11	3.28
1988[1]	0.72	0.72	2.48	3.40	3.93
1989[1]	0.71	0.71	2.54	3.34	4.55
1990[1]	0.66	0.66	2.28	3.19	3.50
1991[1]	0.65	0.66	2.21	3.24	3.42
1992[1,2]	0.65	0.66	2.27	3.21	3.27

See footnotes at end of table.

Table C6.—Standard errors for C5: High school completion rates for 21- and 22-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992—(continued)

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity			
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
(As percent of those in age group not currently enrolled in high school or below)					
1972	0.65	0.67	2.47	4.18	8.94
1973	0.64	0.64	2.57	4.10	4.75
1974	0.60	0.61	2.42	4.00	5.29
1975	0.60	0.60	2.56	3.94	7.26
1976	0.59	0.60	2.35	4.17	4.77
1977	0.61	0.62	2.46	4.06	4.46
1978	0.60	0.61	2.38	3.82	4.45
1979	0.59	0.59	2.43	3.70	5.42
1980	0.58	0.58	2.22	3.70	4.93
1981	0.58	0.59	2.20	3.48	4.95
1982	0.61	0.64	2.16	3.69	4.69
1983	0.61	0.63	2.21	3.76	4.88
1984	0.60	0.63	2.21	3.54	4.81
1985	0.60	0.64	2.06	3.26	4.16
1986	0.63	0.65	2.16	3.10	3.37
1987[1]	0.65	0.70	2.36	3.11	3.31
1988[1]	0.72	0.71	2.47	3.42	3.93
1989[1]	0.70	0.70	2.51	3.36	4.46
1990[1]	0.65	0.65	2.25	3.21	3.50
1991[1]	0.64	0.65	2.17	3.25	3.31
1992[1,2]	0.64	0.65	0.71	3.22	3.28

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[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years).

Table C7.—High school completion rates for 23- and 24-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992

		Race–ethnicity			
Year	Total	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
(As percent of age group)					
1972	82.5	85.7	72.2	51.8	88.3
1973	94.1	87.0	73.9	60.1	76.1
1974	84.3	88.2	72.4	53.7	84.5
1975	85.2	89.2	70.8	54.7	81.1
1976	84.7	88.2	72.0	60.4	83.5
1977	84.7	88.2	74.9	54.0	89.5
1978	84.6	87.8	75.2	60.0	88.3
1979	84.0	88.1	74.3	52.2	83.0
1980	84.3	87.8	74.4	58.3	88.9
1981	84.2	87.8	75.7	58.1	84.5
1982	85.3	88.6	77.3	61.2	87.1
1983	83.9	87.9	74.4	55.5	83.5
1984	84.9	88.6	79.2	57.6	81.3
1985	86.1	89.3	80.9	67.4	81.5
1986	85.3	88.8	81.9	61.7	85.8
1987[1]	84.7	88.0	84.2	62.0	84.7
1988[1]	85.9	89.4	84.6	62.5	80.7
1989[1]	85.5	90.5	86.3	55.0	83.8
1990[1]	85.8	90.2	85.4	55.6	92.5
1991[1]	84.2	89.7	85.3	50.2	91.5
1992[1,2]	87.0	91.7	84.3	58.0	93.1

See footnotes at end of table.

Table C7.—High school completion rates for 23- and 24-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992—(continued)

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity			
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
(As percent of those in age group not currently enrolled in high school or below)					
1972	82.8	85.9	72.7	52.6	88.3
1973	84.5	87.4	74.8	60.1	78.6
1974	84.6	88.4	73.0	54.1	84.5
1975	85.6	89.6	71.0	54.9	81.1
1976	85.0	88.3	72.5	60.7	85.2
1977	85.1	88.4	75.2	55.1	90.7
1978	85.0	88.1	76.2	60.4	88.3
1979	84.3	88.3	75.2	52.2	83.0
1980	84.7	88.2	75.2	58.6	89.2
1981	84.7	88.1	76.5	58.7	85.2
1982	85.7	88.9	78.3	61.4	87.1
1983	84.3	88.1	75.2	56.2	85.1
1984	85.2	88.9	79.8	58.4	81.9
1985	86.3	89.5	81.5	67.5	81.6
1986	85.6	89.0	82.2	62.2	86.6
1987[1]	84.9	88.2	84.6	62.1	84.5
1988[1]	86.1	89.6	84.7	62.8	82.0
1989[1]	85.8	90.6	87.2	55.3	84.2
1990[1]	86.1	90.3	86.0	56.1	92.5
1991[1]	84.7	89.9	86.7	50.9	92.0
1992[1,2]	87.5	91.9	85.7	59.0	93.5

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[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years).

Table C8.—Standard errors for Table C7: High school completion rates for 23- and 24-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity			
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
		(As percent of age group)			
1972	0.66	0.67	2.74	4.37	5.56
1973	0.62	0.62	2.53	4.45	6.97
1974	0.62	0.61	2.70	4.00	5.48
1975	0.60	0.58	2.69	4.33	5.25
1976	0.61	0.60	2.61	4.08	5.01
1977	0.60	0.60	2.48	4.04	4.26
1978	0.60	0.61	2.48	3.77	4.33
1979	0.60	0.60	2.41	3.78	5.24
1980	0.59	0.60	2.42	3.56	4.12
1981	0.57	0.58	2.23	3.52	4.13
1982	0.59	0.60	2.28	3.63	4.01
1983	0.60	0.61	2.39	3.60	4.14
1984	0.59	0.60	2.12	3.47	4.24
1985	0.59	0.60	2.16	3.13	4.37
1986	0.59	0.61	2.09	3.13	3.73
1987[1]	0.61	0.64	1.99	2.99	3.98
1988[1]	0.65	0.66	2.17	3.36	4.60
1989[1]	0.67	0.66	2.06	3.18	4.53
1990[1]	0.65	0.66	2.15	3.25	2.99
1991[1]	0.69	0.69	2.30	3.11	2.84
1992[1,2]	0.63	0.61	2.16	3.23	2.82

See footnotes at end of table.

Table C8.—Standard errors for Table C7: High school completion rates for 23- and 24-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992—(continued)

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity			
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
(As percent of those in age group not currently enrolled in high school or below)					
1972	0.66	0.66	2.74	4.40	5.56
1973	0.61	0.62	2.51	4.45	6.81
1974	0.62	0.61	2.70	4.02	5.48
1975	0.59	0.57	2.69	4.34	5.25
1976	0.60	0.60	2.61	4.08	4.84
1977	0.59	0.59	2.48	4.08	4.05
1978	0.59	0.60	2.46	3.78	4.33
1979	0.60	0.59	2.39	3.78	5.24
1980	0.59	0.59	2.41	3.56	4.07
1981	0.57	0.57	2.21	3.53	4.07
1982	0.58	0.59	2.26	3.63	4.01
1983	0.60	0.60	2.37	3.62	4.01
1984	0.58	0.59	2.10	3.48	4.21
1985	0.58	0.60	2.14	3.13	4.36
1986	0.59	0.61	2.08	3.14	3.66
1987[1]	0.61	0.64	1.97	2.99	4.01
1988[1]	0.64	0.66	2.17	3.36	4.51
1989[1]	0.66	0.65	2.01	3.19	4.50
1990[1]	0.65	0.65	2.13	3.27	3.00
1991[1]	0.69	0.68	2.22	3.13	2.76
1992[1,2]	0.62	0.61	2.10	3.25	2.75

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[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years).

Table C9.—High school completion rates for 25- and 26-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992

		Race–ethnicity			
Year	Total	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
		(As percent of age group)			
1972	82.8	85.9	71.3	48.9	90.8
1973	83.4	86.8	70.6	52.3	79.6
1974	84.6	87.4	75.6	57.5	79.2
1975	84.8	88.5	76.1	52.4	80.6
1976	84.7	88.4	76.7	54.1	83.9
1977	85.7	88.5	76.1	61.1	83.1
1978	85.0	88.5	74.5	55.7	84.3
1979	85.7	89.0	74.3	58.7	89.7
1980	84.5	88.3	74.3	57.3	84.0
1981	84.8	88.5	78.2	57.1	86.3
1982	84.5	88.4	76.7	57.1	88.8
1983	86.0	89.4	79.7	59.5	86.4
1984	85.5	89.1	79.3	57.8	83.3
1985	85.5	89.1	81.0	61.5	88.9
1986	85.4	88.6	83.1	62.3	85.0
1987[1]	84.9	87.7	83.1	64.7	86.1
1988[1]	85.9	89.9	83.3	59.5	90.6
1989[1]	86.0	90.4	83.0	57.8	86.2
1990[1]	85.0	90.4	80.0	54.9	85.2
1991[1]	85.4	90.2	83.0	56.7	89.0
1992[1,2]	86.6	91.3	85.7	57.7	85.6

See footnotes at end of table.

Table C9.—High school completion rates for 25- and 26-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992—(continued)

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity White, non-Hispanic	 Black, non-Hispanic	 Hispanic	 Other
(As percent of those in age group not currently enrolled in high school or below)					
1972	82.9	86.0	71.7	49.3	94.3
1973	83.7	87.0	71.0	52.3	80.6
1974	84.9	87.6	76.3	59.3	80.2
1975	85.3	88.9	76.6	53.1	80.6
1976	85.0	88.6	76.7	54.8	83.9
1977	86.0	88.6	76.5	62.1	86.5
1978	85.2	88.6	74.7	56.2	84.8
1979	86.0	89.3	74.8	59.2	90.3
1980	84.8	88.6	74.4	58.4	84.9
1981	85.1	88.7	78.7	57.6	86.4
1982	85.0	88.8	77.1	57.7	88.8
1983	86.2	89.5	80.4	59.9	86.9
1984	85.8	89.2	79.5	58.5	83.9
1985	85.7	89.2	81.4	61.8	89.4
1986	85.7	88.8	84.0	62.7	85.5
1987[1]	85.2	88.0	83.6	64.9	86.1
1988[1]	86.0	90.0	83.5	59.5	91.0
1989[1]	86.2	90.5	83.4	58.2	87.6
1990[1]	85.3	90.7	80.3	55.5	85.1
1991[1]	85.5	90.3	83.2	57.0	89.0
1992[1,2]	86.9	91.4	86.6	57.9	85.6

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[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years).

Table C10.—Standard errors for Table C9: High school completion rates for 25- and 26-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
		(As percent of age group)			
1972	0.68	0.68	3.06	4.70	5.44
1973	0.64	0.64	2.84	4.61	6.24
1974	0.63	0.64	2.67	4.58	6.13
1975	0.63	0.62	2.55	4.27	5.68
1976	0.62	0.61	2.63	3.81	5.40
1977	0.59	0.59	2.66	4.14	6.05
1978	0.60	0.60	2.56	4.08	4.83
1979	0.59	0.59	2.57	4.11	4.32
1980	0.60	0.60	2.53	3.62	5.17
1981	0.58	0.59	2.15	3.47	3.77
1982	0.60	0.61	2.32	3.49	3.67
1983	0.57	0.58	2.19	3.58	3.74
1984	0.58	0.59	2.25	3.61	3.84
1985	0.58	0.59	2.17	3.06	3.34
1986	0.58	0.60	2.09	2.98	3.99
1987[1]	0.60	0.63	2.05	3.01	3.78
1988[1]	0.63	0.63	2.21	3.16	3.42
1989[1]	0.63	0.63	2.24	3.30	3.95
1990[1]	0.64	0.62	2.29	3.13	3.68
1991[1]	0.65	0.64	2.21	3.11	3.52
1992[1,2]	0.64	0.62	2.13	3.22	3.77

See footnotes at end of table.

Table C10.—Standard errors for Table C9: High school completion rates for 25- and 26-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992—(continued)

		Race–ethnicity			
Year	Total	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
(As percent of those in age group not currently enrolled in high school or below)					
1972	0.67	0.68	3.06	4.72	4.45
1973	0.64	0.63	2.84	4.61	6.16
1974	0.63	0.64	2.65	4.62	6.06
1975	0.62	0.62	2.54	4.29	5.68
1976	0.61	0.61	2.63	3.83	5.40
1977	0.59	0.59	2.65	4.16	5.63
1978	0.60	0.59	2.56	4.09	4.78
1979	0.59	0.58	2.56	4.12	4.22
1980	0.60	0.59	2.52	3.64	5.08
1981	0.58	0.59	2.14	3.48	3.75
1982	0.60	0.60	2.31	3.50	3.67
1983	0.57	0.58	2.17	3.59	3.69
1984	0.58	0.58	2.25	3.62	3.80
1985	0.58	0.59	2.16	3.06	3.28
1986	0.58	0.59	2.06	2.99	3.94
1987[1]	0.59	0.63	2.04	3.02	3.78
1988[1]	0.62	0.63	2.20	3.16	3.36
1989[1]	0.63	0.63	2.22	3.31	3.80
1990[1]	0.63	0.61	2.29	3.15	3.70
1991[1]	0.65	0.64	2.20	3.12	3.52
1992[1,2]	0.63	0.61	2.09	3.22	3.77

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[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years).

Table C11.—High school completion rates for 27- and 28-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992

		Race–ethnicity			
Year	Total	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
		(As percent of age group)			
1972	78.8	82.0	66.6	51.1	87.0
1973	80.8	84.1	68.9	48.7	85.4
1974	83.6	86.9	71.9	47.5	89.0
1975	84.6	87.7	69.1	60.7	92.7
1976	84.8	88.3	75.3	51.4	87.7
1977	86.1	89.3	75.7	61.9	85.5
1978	85.9	89.2	77.6	60.9	82.5
1979	86.3	89.6	78.7	55.7	84.8
1980	86.6	89.9	78.3	58.9	87.6
1981	86.2	90.0	78.6	54.0	89.5
1982	87.1	89.6	84.5	60.3	86.0
1983	86.0	89.2	80.8	58.7	90.6
1984	86.5	89.6	81.9	60.9	87.5
1985	85.8	89.1	84.9	57.1	82.2
1986	86.0	90.2	79.6	60.2	86.7
1987[1]	85.5	89.6	79.6	61.7	89.8
1988[1]	85.1	89.3	84.9	53.4	86.8
1989[1]	86.5	90.4	80.5	61.0	88.6
1990[1]	85.6	90.1	81.2	57.7	84.8
1991[1]	85.7	89.6	83.3	57.1	89.6
1992[1,2]	87.0	90.7	86.2	62.6	91.0

See footnotes at end of table.

Table C11.—High school completion rates for 27- and 28-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992—(continued)

(As percent of those in age group not currently enrolled in high school or below)

		Race–ethnicity			
Year	Total	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
1972	79.0	82.1	67.1	51.6	87.0
1973	81.0	84.2	69.3	49.2	85.4
1974	83.8	87.0	72.2	47.7	89.0
1975	84.8	87.9	69.7	60.7	92.7
1976	85.0	88.5	75.5	51.6	87.7
1977	86.3	89.5	75.8	62.2	86.0
1978	86.0	89.3	77.8	61.1	82.5
1979	86.5	89.7	79.1	56.3	85.4
1980	87.0	90.2	78.9	59.3	87.6
1981	86.5	90.1	79.2	54.8	89.5
1982	87.4	89.9	84.7	61.2	86.6
1983	86.3	89.5	81.2	58.9	91.3
1984	86.7	89.8	82.3	60.9	87.5
1985	86.0	89.3	85.0	57.6	82.8
1986	86.3	90.4	79.9	60.5	86.7
1987[1]	85.7	89.7	79.6	62.0	90.3
1988[1]	85.3	89.5	84.9	53.8	86.8
1989[1]	86.8	90.6	80.9	61.7	89.0
1990[1]	85.9	90.4	81.4	58.2	84.8
1991[1]	86.0	89.9	83.5	57.4	89.6
1992[1,2]	87.4	90.8	87.5	63.2	91.8

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[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years).

Table C12.—Standard errors for Table C11: High school completion rates for 27- and 28-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992

		Race–ethnicity			
Year	Total	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
(As percent of age group)					
1972	0.79	0.81	3.24	4.84	6.76
1973	0.74	0.75	3.12	4.97	6.14
1974	0.65	0.64	3.00	4.64	5.35
1975	0.61	0.61	2.93	4.12	3.61
1976	0.62	0.62	2.58	4.29	4.34
1977	0.61	0.61	2.58	4.18	4.54
1978	0.60	0.60	2.45	3.94	5.22
1979	0.59	0.58	2.51	4.00	4.76
1980	0.57	0.56	2.34	3.90	4.17
1981	0.56	0.55	2.28	3.55	3.54
1982	0.56	0.57	2.10	3.81	3.74
1983	0.58	0.59	2.26	3.49	3.11
1984	0.56	0.57	2.04	3.44	3.73
1985	0.58	0.59	1.98	3.34	3.89
1986	0.57	0.56	2.18	3.06	3.68
1987[1]	0.57	0.58	2.24	2.83	3.01
1988[1]	0.64	0.64	2.13	3.29	3.65
1989[1]	0.61	0.61	2.43	3.42	3.39
1990[1]	0.61	0.60	2.20	3.15	3.78
1991[1]	0.62	0.62	2.13	3.28	3.29
1992[1,2]	0.60	0.61	1.97	3.03	3.12

See footnotes at end of table.

Table C12.—Standard errors for Table C11: High school completion rates for 27- and 28-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992—(continued)

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity			
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
(As percent of those in age group not currently enrolled in high school or below)					
1972	0.78	0.81	3.24	4.86	6.76
1973	0.74	0.75	3.11	5.00	6.14
1974	0.65	0.64	2.99	4.65	5.35
1975	0.61	0.60	2.92	4.12	3.61
1976	0.62	0.61	2.58	4.30	4.34
1977	0.61	0.60	2.58	4.18	4.50
1978	0.60	0.60	2.44	3.94	5.22
1979	0.58	0.58	2.50	4.02	4.70
1980	0.57	0.56	2.32	3.90	4.17
1981	0.55	0.54	2.27	3.57	3.54
1982	0.56	0.57	2.08	3.82	3.69
1983	0.58	0.59	2.24	3.50	3.03
1984	0.56	0.57	2.03	3.44	3.73
1985	0.57	0.59	1.97	3.35	3.86
1986	0.56	0.56	2.17	3.07	3.68
1987[1]	0.57	0.57	2.26	2.84	2.96
1988[1]	0.63	0.64	2.13	3.30	3.65
1989[1]	0.61	0.61	2.42	3.43	3.35
1990[1]	0.60	0.59	2.20	3.15	3.78
1991[1]	0.61	0.62	2.13	3.29	3.29
1992[1,2]	0.59	0.61	1.90	3.04	3.00

[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years).

Table C13.—High school completion rates for 29- and 30-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992

		Race–ethnicity			
Year	Total	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
		(As percent of age group)			
1972	77.8	81.8	62.5	48.1	73.0
1973	80.2	83.3	67.5	45.1	83.7
1974	80.6	84.1	65.9	50.9	81.1
1975	80.4	84.5	62.9	53.1	80.5
1976	81.8	85.6	68.2	48.6	79.7
1977	83.1	87.0	71.5	51.0	80.8
1978	86.1	89.2	78.5	56.9	87.2
1979	85.5	89.7	75.1	51.4	86.4
1980	86.5	90.1	79.4	58.3	79.0
1981	87.1	90.8	81.5	54.8	88.2
1982	87.4	90.7	80.4	60.1	85.5
1983	87.0	90.7	81.3	57.4	83.7
1984	87.3	90.6	80.4	60.4	85.4
1985	85.8	89.4	79.5	61.6	85.8
1986	86.4	89.8	81.7	62.6	85.7
1987[1]	86.7	90.4	83.3	60.5	83.6
1988[1]	87.3	90.3	84.3	65.1	88.1
1989[1]	86.2	90.8	82.2	55.1	86.6
1990[1]	86.5	91.0	80.3	58.6	82.9
1991[1]	85.9	89.8	83.5	56.3	85.2
1992[1,2]	86.0	91.4	80.2	54.3	86.9

See footnotes at end of table.

Table C13.—High school completion rates for 29- and 30-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992—(continued)

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
	(As percent of those in age group not currently enrolled in high school or below)				
1972	77.9	81.9	62.9	48.1	73.0
1973	80.3	83.5	67.8	45.1	83.7
1974	80.7	84.3	65.9	50.9	81.1
1975	80.9	84.8	63.3	54.1	82.5
1976	82.1	86.0	68.6	48.6	79.7
1977	83.5	87.4	71.6	51.0	82.9
1978	86.4	89.4	78.8	57.4	88.0
1979	85.7	89.9	75.3	51.7	86.4
1980	86.8	90.3	80.0	58.5	79.5
1981	87.3	90.9	81.6	55.4	88.2
1982	87.5	90.8	80.4	60.4	85.6
1983	87.1	90.8	81.3	57.6	83.8
1984	87.4	90.7	80.8	60.5	85.4
1985	86.1	89.7	79.8	61.8	86.1
1986	86.7	90.0	82.0	63.2	86.1
1987[1]	86.8	90.5	83.6	60.8	83.6
1988[1]	87.4	90.4	84.5	65.3	88.2
1989[1]	86.4	91.0	82.5	55.3	87.4
1990[1]	86.7	91.1	80.8	58.8	83.7
1991[1]	86.2	90.0	83.8	57.1	85.2
1992[1,2]	86.2	91.6	80.4	54.8	86.8

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[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years).

Table C14.—Standard errors for Table C13: High school completion rates for 29- and 30-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
		(As percent of age group)			
1972	0.79	0.80	3.24	4.80	8.65
1973	0.75	0.76	3.35	5.22	6.98
1974	0.76	0.77	3.27	5.06	6.22
1975	0.74	0.74	3.27	4.57	6.03
1976	0.68	0.68	2.93	4.46	6.46
1977	0.64	0.64	2.68	4.24	5.63
1978	0.60	0.60	2.53	4.09	4.56
1979	0.60	0.58	2.50	3.96	4.23
1980	0.57	0.56	2.40	3.73	4.80
1981	0.56	0.54	2.23	3.59	3.83
1982	0.58	0.57	2.43	3.87	3.73
1983	0.57	0.56	2.32	3.68	4.03
1984	0.55	0.55	2.32	3.65	3.41
1985	0.58	0.58	2.29	3.24	3.72
1986	0.57	0.58	2.08	3.28	3.69
1987[1]	0.55	0.55	1.95	3.16	4.00
1988[1]	0.59	0.61	2.16	3.32	3.50
1989[1]	0.60	0.59	2.20	3.31	3.83
1990[1]	0.58	0.56	2.23	3.27	4.05
1991[1]	0.59	0.59	2.12	3.26	3.65
1992[1,2]	0.59	0.56	2.21	3.05	3.71

See footnotes at end of table.

Table C14.—Standard errors for Table C13: High school completion rates for 29- and 30-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992—(continued)

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity			
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
(As percent of those in age group not currently enrolled in high school or below)					
1972	0.79	0.80	3.25	4.80	8.65
1973	0.75	0.76	3.35	5.22	6.98
1974	0.76	0.77	3.27	5.06	6.22
1975	0.73	0.74	3.27	4.61	5.86
1976	0.67	0.67	2.93	4.46	6.46
1977	0.64	0.63	2.67	4.24	5.45
1978	0.60	0.59	2.53	4.10	4.45
1979	0.60	0.58	2.49	3.97	4.23
1980	0.57	0.56	2.38	3.73	4.77
1981	0.55	0.54	2.23	3.60	3.83
1982	0.57	0.56	2.43	3.87	3.72
1983	0.57	0.56	2.32	3.68	4.02
1984	0.55	0.55	2.31	3.65	3.41
1985	0.58	0.58	2.28	3.25	3.70
1986	0.57	0.57	2.07	3.28	3.66
1987[1]	0.55	0.55	1.94	3.16	4.00
1988[1]	0.59	0.60	2.15	3.32	3.49
1989[1]	0.60	0.58	2.19	3.32	3.74
1990[1]	0.58	0.56	2.22	3.29	3.99
1991[1]	0.58	0.58	2.11	3.28	3.65
1992[1,2]	0.59	0.55	2.21	3.06	3.73

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[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years).

Table C15.—High school completion rates for 31- through 34-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity			
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
		(As percent of age group)			
1972	73.9	77.8	58.5	43.5	74.7
1973	74.8	78.9	60.2	41.6	76.0
1974	77.6	81.5	63.8	44.7	80.8
1975	79.1	83.0	63.2	49.6	85.1
1976	79.6	83.0	67.6	51.2	85.8
1977	81.0	84.4	67.2	52.9	87.6
1978	82.9	86.5	70.6	49.7	85.8
1979	83.7	87.2	73.1	53.0	85.4
1980	84.8	88.4	75.6	52.6	80.0
1981	85.7	89.3	77.9	54.1	83.5
1982	86.3	90.2	79.2	52.5	81.9
1983	87.3	91.3	79.5	55.7	82.6
1984	87.5	91.4	78.8	57.1	82.0
1985	87.4	91.4	79.4	57.9	84.9
1986	87.3	91.6	78.9	57.1	85.0
1987[1]	87.3	91.3	79.1	58.8	87.6
1988[1]	86.9	90.5	84.6	57.8	85.3
1989[1]	86.8	90.8	80.8	60.5	87.0
1990[1]	87.2	91.5	83.3	57.6	85.7
1991[1]	86.8	91.7	85.0	51.2	85.3
1992[1,2]	88.0	92.2	84.2	60.4	84.5

See footnotes at end of table.

Table C15.—High school completion rates for 31- through 34-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992—(continued)

		Race–ethnicity			
Year	Total	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
	(As percent of those in age group not currently enrolled in high school or below)				
1972	74.1	78.0	58.8	43.8	74.7
1973	75.0	79.0	60.5	41.8	76.0
1974	77.8	81.6	64.4	44.7	80.8
1975	79.4	83.3	63.4	50.0	85.1
1976	79.8	83.2	68.0	51.3	87.5
1977	81.2	84.6	67.4	53.4	87.6
1978	83.1	86.7	70.9	50.0	86.6
1979	83.9	87.4	73.3	53.5	86.0
1980	84.9	88.5	76.1	52.9	80.9
1981	85.9	89.4	78.4	54.5	84.3
1982	86.5	90.4	79.2	52.8	82.4
1983	87.5	91.4	80.1	56.1	83.3
1984	87.7	91.5	79.4	57.4	83.2
1985	87.5	91.5	79.7	58.1	85.2
1986	87.5	91.8	79.1	57.3	85.3
1987[1]	87.5	91.3	79.5	59.6	88.0
1988[1]	87.1	90.5	84.6	58.8	85.5
1989[1]	87.0	90.9	81.2	61.1	87.2
1990[1]	87.3	91.6	83.6	57.6	86.4
1991[1]	87.0	91.8	85.6	51.2	85.3
1992[1,2]	88.1	92.3	84.5	60.7	84.6

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[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years).

Table C16.—Standard errors for Table C15: High school completion rates for 31- through 34-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity			
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
		(As percent of age group)			
1972	0.65	0.67	2.61	3.68	7.18
1973	0.62	0.65	2.48	3.55	5.43
1974	0.58	0.60	2.37	3.47	4.72
1975	0.56	0.57	2.38	3.35	4.28
1976	0.54	0.56	2.30	3.21	3.76
1977	0.53	0.54	2.35	3.27	3.51
1978	0.49	0.49	2.22	3.22	3.62
1979	0.47	0.47	2.05	3.01	3.55
1980	0.45	0.44	1.95	2.92	3.82
1981	0.42	0.41	1.78	2.74	3.02
1982	0.43	0.42	1.79	2.89	3.21
1983	0.42	0.40	1.74	2.78	2.95
1984	0.41	0.39	1.72	2.87	2.98
1985	0.40	0.39	1.67	2.62	2.68
1986	0.39	0.37	1.68	2.47	2.66
1987[1]	0.39	0.38	1.66	2.42	2.41
1988[1]	0.43	0.43	1.55	2.53	2.88
1989[1]	0.42	0.42	1.67	2.41	2.57
1990[1]	0.40	0.39	1.52	2.28	2.75
1991[1]	0.41	0.38	1.42	2.28	2.67
1992[1,2]	0.39	0.37	1.45	2.22	2.60

See footnotes at end of table.

Table C16.—Standard errors for Table C15: High school completion rates for 31- through 34-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through 1992—(continued)

		Race–ethnicity			
Year	Total	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other
(As percent of those in age group not currently enrolled in high school or below)					
1972	0.64	0.67	2.61	3.70	7.18
1973	0.62	0.65	2.49	3.56	5.43
1974	0.58	0.60	2.38	3.47	4.72
1975	0.55	0.56	2.38	3.37	4.28
1976	0.54	0.56	2.30	3.22	3.60
1977	0.53	0.54	2.35	3.28	3.51
1978	0.49	0.49	2.22	3.23	3.55
1979	0.47	0.47	2.05	3.02	3.50
1980	0.45	0.44	1.95	2.93	3.78
1981	0.42	0.41	1.78	2.75	2.98
1982	0.43	0.42	1.79	2.89	3.19
1983	0.41	0.40	1.73	2.78	2.91
1984	0.41	0.39	1.71	2.87	2.92
1985	0.40	0.38	1.66	2.62	2.65
1986	0.39	0.37	1.68	2.47	2.64
1987[1]	0.39	0.38	1.66	2.43	2.40
1988[1]	0.43	0.43	1.55	2.54	2.87
1989[1]	0.42	0.42	1.66	2.42	2.56
1990[1]	0.40	0.39	1.52	2.29	2.70
1991[1]	0.40	0.38	1.40	2.29	2.67
1992[1,2]	0.39	0.37	1.45	2.22	2.60

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[1] Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.

[2] Number for this year reflects new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years).

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